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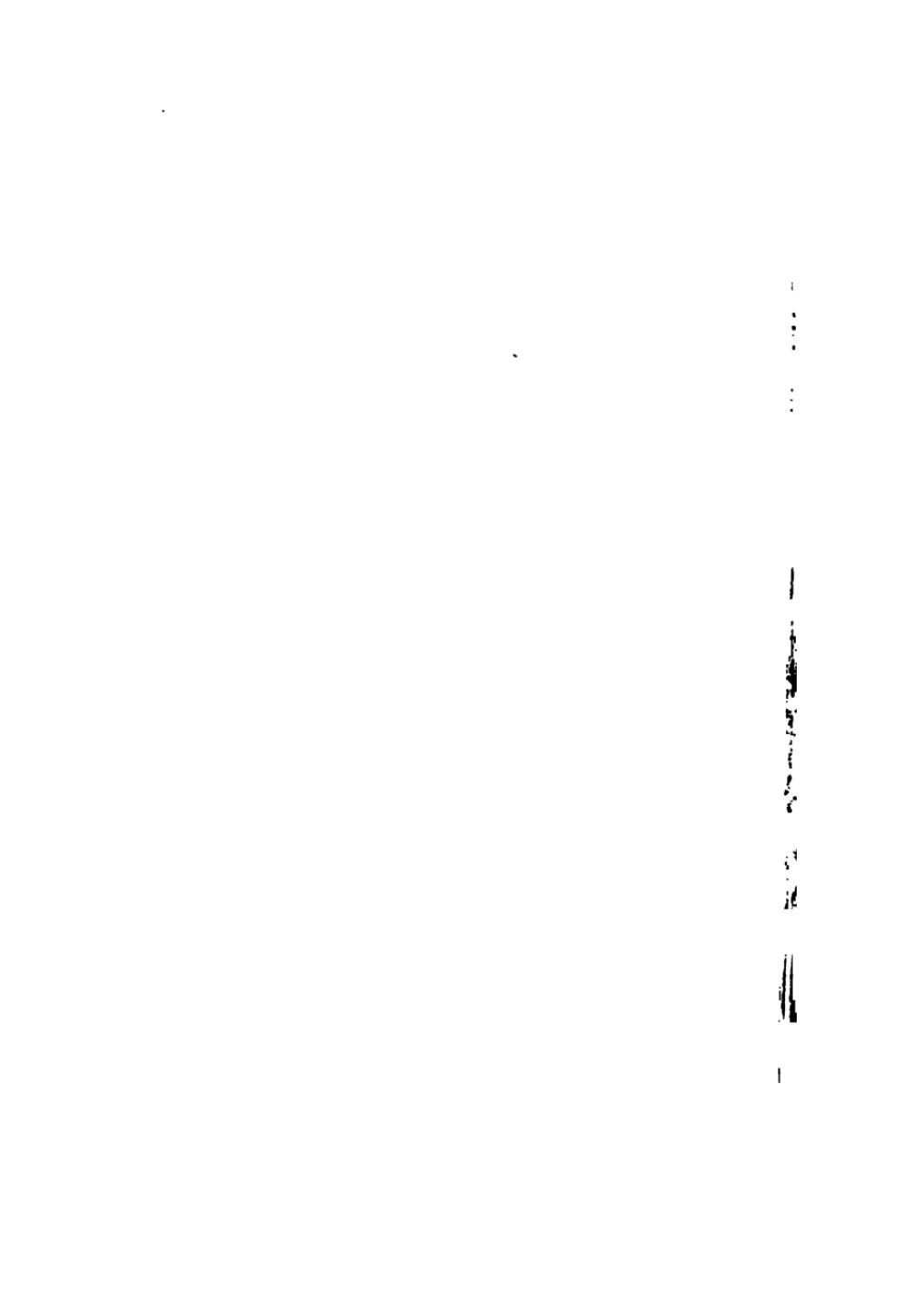


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E S S A Y S
AND
DISSERTATIONS
ON
VARIOUS SUBJECTS,
RELATING TO
HUMAN LIFE AND HAPPINESS.

By John Bellamy

In Two Volumes.

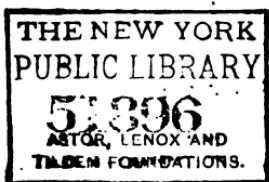
VOL. I.

*Ἐν τῷ γράφειν δὲ ἀνηγγινώσκων, ὃ πρότερον ἀρχέτεις πρὶν ἀρχέτεις,
φύτε πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἐν τῷ βίῳ.* M. ANTONINUS.

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G. J. C. A.



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A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

IT will be easy to see, from the *preceding TABLE of CONTENTS*, that any fault, with which the following *Tracts* may be chargeable, lies not in the choice of the *Subjects*, which are the most important and interesting that can engage the attention of mankind: The *Author* thought so as to himself, and committed his thoughts on most of them to writing, at different times, chiefly for his own *private* benefit, in the way of precision and establishment as to these points. Long confinement by bodily indisposition, having put it out of his power to be of that usefulness, he would wish, to others in a more *active* sphere of life, he desires to make up, in some measure, for this, by communicating to them his more retired exercises in a literary and *contemplative* way, or whatever he has found most for his own satisfaction and improvement; in like manner as a physician of humanity would not wish to leave the world, without making, whatever he has found most conducive to his own health and that of others, as generally

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

rally known as possible: in the present case, indeed, the Author ventures on this with some diffidence, not of his *conclusions*, but of his own *abilities*, in the way of doing that justice he would wish to the different subjects treated of; but this, he hopes, will not be judged of from a *short, cursory* perusal of what he has endeavoured to make worthy of more *careful attention*: The *ESSAYS* indeed, (which makes but a *fifth part* of the following work,) were wrote sometimes in a hurry, (as weekly publications often are,) a few years ago, nor have they since been altered: But in the *DISSERTATIONS*, (none of which was ever published before,) he has endeavoured to bring what is most important, in a speculative as well as practical view, with respect to the different subjects treated of, into as narrow a compass as is consistent with perspicuity and accuracy; and to carry his inquiries (as much as possible,) into the *real nature* of the things themselves, according to the light in which they appeared to him, without enlarging on such particulars

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

culars as had (to his knowledge) been fully and distinctly treated of, in the same way, by others, to whom he refers. After all, however, it must be owned, that, let the labour and hopes of a *Writer* be what they will, the *attention* commonly *claimed* by him must be given, before it can be known how far his *claim* to it is well founded.

Whatever information is necessary, with respect to the *occasion* and *design* of the following *Essays* in particular, shall be taken notice of in the *Notes*.



E S S A Y S

O N

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

E S S A Y I.

Occasion and Design of the Essays, with Thoughts on GRATITUDE, par- ticularly as it has respect to GOD.

Thursday, Jan. 2. 1766.

—*Olim haec meminisse juvabit.* VIRG.
These to remember, may long hence avail.

ZE A L for the service of the public has, in these patriotic times, so increased the number of periodical Writers, that the whole catalogue of Titles seems to be almost exhausted; and it is hard to say whether the obtaining a proper office, or a name to distinguish it, be most difficult. The venerable names of *Spectator*, *Guardian*, and *Rambler*, are now no more; " along Vol. I. A " the

2 Occasion and Design of the ESSAYS,

" the stream of time they flow expanded—
" and gather all their fame." We have
since, however, had our Schemers, our
Monitors, Auditors, and Censors; and even
an humble candidat for fame, by the name
of Trister; but without presuming to lessen
their merit, there seems to be one Province
as yet unoccupied, the command of which
may be distinguished by the name, stile, and
title, of *Remembrancer**.

THE commencement of a new period,
which has given rise to so many annual
Registers, Kalendars, and Journals, for the
benefit of commercial life, seems to call for
something similar in a social and moral
view; some office-bearer analogous to what
was

* The occasion of this Introduction, and of
some references afterwards to the title of **RE-
MEMBRANCER**, was, that the following Essays
were first published under that name, weekly in
Bath, for some months of the year 1766, and
the Author's honour pledged to several respectable
Gentlemen there, for collecting and republishing
them with some additional tracts, as soon as he
conveniently could, but his removal from that
place to a considerable distance from any press,
occasioned his delaying this till now, and digesting
his thoughts on some other interesting subjects in
his view, in the form of Dissertations, which
make by far the greatest part of the following
work, and were never before published.

was instituted by an antient eastern Monarch, for reminding him that he was mortal ; let this then be considered as the chief, but not the only province of the *Remembrancer* ; whatever subject appears to be of particular importance in the view above mentioned, yet in danger of being overlook'd or forgotten, amidst the dissipation of pleasure, the debility of idleness, or the hurry and noise of tumultuous life : To this it is his business to engage the attention of his countrymen, without exception of any subject but what is either mechanical or political ; these he leaves to other Managers, whose number and talents are such, as that they need none of his assistance ; there being no occasion for being reminded of any thing that does not seem to be in danger of being forgot. For the same reason it may be expected that what is serious shall always have a preference to what is humorous, in the labours of the *Remembrancer* ; tho' the latter cannot be entirely excluded, without prejudice to the former..

As beginning the year with advantage is the occasion of his labours, there is no such prospect of their being long continued, as can make any thing that relates to himself personally a matter of importance to the public, his business and endeavour should be to turn their attention to his

A 2 subject,

4 *Occasion and Design of the ESSAYS,*

subject, and not to himself ; so that his name and family, with the form of his person, and length or shortness of his visage, shall, in regard chiefly to his own ease, continue equally unknown ; tho', in any other respect, he has nothing to hope nor to fear from the discovery ; and by reducing his weekly admonitions to very narrow limits, he hopes to prevent their becoming burdensome to himself or to others.

In conformity, however, to the motto he has chosen for this introductory essay, it will be necessary for him to lengthen it so far as not to dismiss his readers till he has reminded them of something which they shall afterwards be the better of having remembered ; and, among the variety of subjects that occur, there is none by which they may find in the issue more pleasure and advantage, or which seems to be more suitable to a season of general gaiety and gladness, as well as to a place where so many have had distinguishing proofs of the divine goodness, than to reflect a little on the many grounds of gratitude we have to that beneficent Being from whom all being and happiness are derived ; and who, as he is infinitely happy and perfect in himself, has made us in some measure capable of sharing his happiness and perfection. When one year, therefore, is past away, and another in

in the order of nature succeeds it, can any thing be more natural and dutiful for us than to bestow some part of our time in reviewing both the more general and particular displays of his goodness to us in our several different situations of life ? more especially where we have not only the blessing of health to acknowledge, but likeways the continuance or recovery of health so necessary to the enjoyment of it. That inattention and giddiness of thought, which is too prevalent in every one of us, makes it indeed highly necessary for us to lay hold of every favourable opportunity of exciting a due attention to the blessings of heaven, and grateful adoration of the Most High : And these are sentiments and impressions which we cannot be at too much pains to cultivate, if the happiness and perfection of our own souls be any part of our study, for a lively and grateful sense of the divine favours diffuses unspeakable happiness over the mind, and contributes highly to its improvement into a just regard and conformity to the Divine Will, as it is impossible for us to be sincerely thankful either to God or man, without endeavouring to please or gratify him to whom we are thankful, and to whom we reckon ourselves indebted ; whereas an ungrateful heart is, in all cases, and, by all persons,

6 *Occasion and Design of the ESSAYS, &c.*

very justly condemned, as arguing a heart very much depraved, and very destitute of every other good impression.

Let us then recall to our thoughts some of those invaluable blessings which the good hand of our God has bestowed, and continues liberally to bestow upon us, and which we are bound always thankfully to remember and acknowledge : But what tongue can tell the number of his benefits ? Fancy itself is lost in the unmeasurable prospect ; the being and comforts we enjoy at present are from him ; the capacities and hopes we have of higher enjoyment and perfection hereafter, are likewise from him ; every mean of supporting and refreshing the body, every mean of informing and improving the soul, is the gift, the free and unmerited gift of our beneficent Creator ; earth, sea and air, proclaim his goodness ; every season, every region of nature, abounds with the tenderest instances of his affection for the sons of men.

ESSAY

E S S A Y II.

The same Subject continued.

Thursday, Jan. 9. 1766.

—*A grateful Mind
By owing owes not, and still pays;
At once indebted and discharg'd.*

MILTON.

TO undertake no more than we are fully assured of our ability to execute, is a precaution very useful for preventing disquietude to ourselves, and disappointment to others; but had this precaution been always strictly observed, it is very probable, that many schemes of public as well as private utility, would either have perished in their conception, or languished in their progress.

It must therefore be admitted, that tho' a laudable design will not justify the use of unwarrantable means, yet it may excuse our putting something to hazard, in the execution.

Here lies the province of *Enterprize*, it aims at something useful and important, it proceeds with skill and steadiness; but in the prospect of success, and proportion between the abilities and the attempt, there must be so much of uncertainty and hazard,

8 *Occasion and Design of the ESSAYS,*

as leaves room for a display of dexterity and resolution.

It may, however, be a prudent maxim for the *Trader* not to launch *too far* beyond his capital ; for the *Builder* not to begin his work till the materials are all either collected or secured ; and even for the *Literary Adventurer* to undertake no more than he has either materials or resources for accomplishing : But to the last of these cases the maxim is extended with some disadvantage. The *Systematic Writer* may indeed have both the stock of ideas necessary, and some arrangement of them, before he commences his undertaking ; but the *occasional* and *periodical Writer* cannot be so provident ; he knows not what materials and implements his work may require, and must therefore have the larger resources, with a facility of humour and invention for accommodating them to particular and unforeseen emergencies : Hence it is that every writer of this class chuses to enlarge his sphere of *Enterprize*, that by having it in his power to diversify his subjects, he may have some compensation for their coming upon him unprepared ; even as a *Gladiator* would chuse to have the choice of his field for displaying his agility, rather than be kept at bay in a single corner.

Satisfied,

Satisfied, therefore, as to the reasonableness of his plan, and restitude of his intention, the *Remembrancer* proceeds, not with magisterial airs to inform his readers of any thing they knew not before, but to remind them of what they know ; and if, as some have maintained, all knowledge is but reminiscence of what was learned in a *præ-existent* state, he has the advantage of as large a field for displaying his abilities, as any of his predecessors in office, but always with an exception of the subjects excluded in his introductory essay, as being either too far above or below his notice. He also flatters himself that the office he has chosen in the republic of letters, is such as will create no prejudice against himself or his admonitions. He pretends not to be any man's rival or superior in point of *Judgment* ; *Memory* is the province he lays claim to, and which will be more easily yielded to him than the other ; but for the satisfaction of such as will not even condescend to this, he hereby declares his willingness to receive any information or suggestions from them, reserving to himself the liberty of communicating them or not, according as they appear to suit his general plan, which it was necessary for him thus to unfold a little more in his second essay : But he is unwilling to be detained any longer by this general explanation

10 *Occasion and Design of the ESSAYS.*

explanation of it, from prosecuting the subject entered upon in his last, and which the *Motto* he has this day borrowed from an eminent English classic, will probably bring to view.

The importance, and present suitableness of this subject, do indeed make some further consideration of it necessary ; but its extent is such as that no great exercise either of memory or invention would be requisite to enlarge on it much more than the bounds now prescribed will permit us to do on any one subject of whatever importance ; for though *Gratitude* to God, and to man, be a very pleasant and powerful motive to duty, yet it is not the only one, nor the only subject of which we have need to be reminded.

What makes it necessary to take notice of this is, that some, for want of considering any other relation in which we stand to the *Supreme Being*, than as creatures of his Bounty, would have the whole of the regard due to him to consist in *Gratitude*, and the expressions of it in the way of thankfulness and praise.

The celebrated *Voltaire*, *Rousseau*, and some of their admirers, may value them selves for their refined sentiments on this head, as exalting devotion by abridging it ; but by our inspired writings, as well as by experience,

experience, we are taught to consider ourselves not only as creatures highly distinguished by the divine favour, but likewise as *indigent, sinful, and dependent creatures*, to whom other exercises of devotion are necessary as well as *Gratitude*; though this indeed (even in the view of our being *sinners* and of the *Christian* grounds of *Gratitude* thereupon,) should always have the pre-eminence; for if any religious exercise, if any branch of devotion elevates the soul beyond itself, and plants there the image of heaven, it is the exercise of sincere unfeigned *Gratitude* to God, or those devout and affectionate overflowings of soul towards him, which naturally arise from the serious contemplation of his goodness, as displayed to all of us in common, and each in particular.

That the mere enjoyment of being, or even of animal life, alone, challenges returns of gratitude, cannot well be affirmed, because a creature endowed with no higher powers is not capable of the exercise of gratitude; nor shall I affirm that an intellectual or thinking being, tho' full of pain, is much better than to have no being at all*; but

* — For who would lose,
Tho' full of Pain, this intellectual Being,
These Thoughts that wander through Eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide Womb of uncreated Night.

MILTON.

but this I can, with assurance of the truth of it, affirm, that there is not in the whole of God's works any one creature capable of gratitude to him, who has not likewise had cause of gratitude ; as there is not in the whole of his works any one creature capable of happiness to whom he did not originally afford the means of happiness ; that these means of happiness may by some be misimproved and forfeited, is but too consistent with scripture and experience ; that the happiness of others may be interrupted for a time, according to the natural course of things in this world, and yet be again recovered and acknowledged with gratitude, is also agreeable to experience and revelation ; but for any man or any being to be created, capable of happiness and capable of gratitude, without sufficient grounds for these, either in themselves, or as they tend, upon the whole, to beautify and glorify the divine administration, is what can never, with any reason, be imagined or evinced.

Is it then a small thing for us, thus to have had the means of rational happiness, and the capacities of gratitude afforded us ? Is it a small thing for us, to have been made capable of tasting the pleasures of true devotion, of contemplating the beauty of the divine works and ways, and keeping up a religious intercourse with our Maker ? To such

such as have debased their minds by immoderate gratifications of sense and appetite, it may indeed seem a small thing to have a soul capable of higher enjoyments ; while it is only with sensual pleasures they are acquainted, they know not what those purer joys mean : But to such as have their taste of happiness refined and improved by the sublimer views of reason and christianity, all those inferior fugitive delights vanish, and are counted of no value, when compared to these intellectual and permanent enjoyments we are made capable of ; to those ravishing views of GOD and his operations, which transport the soul with gratitude, and elevate it above every thing earthly and sensual, above every mean and created excellency, to a rapturous adoration of that uncreated, that sovereign Author of all bliss and being, whose glory covereth the heavens, and the whole earth is full of his praise.

E S S A Y III.

A View of HUMAN LIFE.

Thursday, Jan. 16. 1766.

Fugit hora levibus aliis.

“ Time on swiftest pinions flies.”

THE rise and fall of nations may be contemplated with advantage by the curious ; but those changes and revolutions which fall within the compass of our own experience must to all in general be still more interesting and improving : The periodical distribution of human life favours such improvement, by bringing our experience in this way more home to our memory and reflection : The events of one year, and its departure, we are naturally reminded of by the commencement of another, which is likewise hastening to its conclusion.

But however often we are thus reminded of human frailty and mortality, there is nothing sooner forgot ; or, at least, whatever conviction it may work with us in the case of others, it has not easily the same effect in our own : The reason of this distinction is, that we do not enter into the schemes and projects of others so as to be blinded

blinded and infatuated by them ; we consider these more impartially ; but, when the case comes to be our own, we act very differently. We are still forming new engagements, new schemes for futurity, without ever thinking that we may want time to accomplish our designs, and enjoy the fruits of them : We live, in short, as if we were to live always ; as if we carried length of days in our right hand ; when there is not one day the sun rises, in which the eyes of thousands are not closed in death.

So far indeed we judge rightly, that we are designed to be active : The thoughts of our end ought not to mar action, enjoyment, or a reasonable foresight, but to regulate our course of action and measure of enjoyment, and, with this view, to make us consider the distributions of providence, some of which are of a more public, others of a more private nature ; the former have a more universal Language, the latter are addressed to fewer, but call them to particular attention.

The shortness of human life is one of those subjects that has been most elegantly treated by Moralists and Poets ; but their descriptions are far exceeded by those of Scripture. Short indeed, may we say, is life, when compared to eternity ; short when compared to the duration of angels, .

short, as it stands at present, when compared to the age of the Antediluvians ; and yet even this, when we review it, how quickly does it seem to have passed ? Adam lived 930 years, and he died ; Seth lived 912 years, and he died ; Methuselah lived 969 years, and he died : We read of an eminent person, who, on attentively reviewing this account of their life and death in quick succession, retired into a monastery, as thinking nothing in so short a life worth the being eagerly pursued, and that no part of it should be abstracted from devotion. Large as the periods might appear, when at their beginning, what are they in the review ? Or, what is any difference between them ? They are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch of the night : How much more may this be said of the period that is now fixed to human life, and which, making some allowance for differences of climate and casual events, seems to have been much the same since the days of Moses and his contemporaries, Cadmus in Greece, and Amenophis* in Egypt, best known by his being (as is most likely) father to Sesostris the Great ? We have no authentic records of any

* The name Pharaoh, given him in the Scripture, was common to the Egyptian Kings for some time, as that of Cæsar was to the Roman Emperors.

any other nation so far back ; but it is probable that (with the allowances mentioned) the condition of human life, in respect of longevity, has been much the same over all, for more than 32 centuries that have intervened, since threescore and ten, or four-score years, were (generally speaking) considered as the utmost verge of frail mortality.

We see then, in that comparative view in which life has been now considered, how short it appears, even if it were all well employed ; but how much shorter must our estimate be, if we consider how it is divided and spent ? How great a part of it is bestowed upon the repairs and concerns of the body in one way or other, in the way of provision or recreation, and how great a part in a state of utter inaction or sleep ? and even of that which is spent in thought, how much in idle and sinful thought ? What part of it then can we reckon rightly spent ? Only what is spent in such a way as has relation to eternity. Much is otherwise employed necessarily, but this alone profitably, and consistently with our highest interests.

But, alas ! how small a part of our time is employed in this way ? How many are they who think all the time lost that is seemingly thus bestowed ; who think all

lost that is abstracted from their worldly pursuits, from the pursuits of wealth, honour, or pleasure? How many who think that small pittance of time a burden which is set apart for religious duties in the way of instruction or devotion? The contemplative or devout man is deemed recluse, idle, and inactive. The man whose office has relation to another life, to admonish, direct, and exhort with a view to it, is thought the most useless member of society, and is so indeed if he has no regard to the ends of his office. Very different (we may well suppose) shall our future views be, of the importance of employments, persons, and pursuits, and it would now be our wisdom to correct our views and sentiments of things, and endeavour to consider them in the same light in which we may most reasonably suppose they shall appear to us, when this world passes away, through the unlimited periods of immortality.

According to the view which we are now taking of our present state of existence, we cannot however avoid observing, that when we consider our own weakness and frailty, we may see cause to wonder, not so much at the shortness of human life, as that we live so long. Within are the seeds of diseases and death, interwoven and mingled with our frame; without are many dangers and

and distresses ; while man is himself too weak to encounter, too blind to foresee and escape them : Whence is it then that he is so easily deluded into a fond expectation of the long continuance of life ? and why so much disappointed when it is otherwise ? The only way in which this can be accounted for is, that, besides the easy progress there is from our wishes to our hopes, and besides that activity, formerly mentioned, in forming new schemes and engagements, which we vainly resolve to see an end of; besides these, I say, we may observe, that it is too common with most of us, when we would judge of the extent of life, at least in our own case, to imagine or present to ourselves the longest period that is commonly attained; yea, and perhaps to extend it a little further, as seeing no impossibility in the case ; while sailing over the sea of Life we make no doubt of reaching the farthest shore, because others either have, or may have reached it. But how slight a foundation is this for our hopes ? We may as well conclude, that because others have arrived at a certain stature, we shall do the same.

All that shall now be added further on this interesting subject, is, that if we are so ready to forget the shortness of life, the more pains should be taken to impress ourselves

selves duly with it, and thereby prevent too great an attachment to its pleasures, or disturbance from its calamities. Not that life is to be embittered by a view of its shortness, but that we should learn from this the proper use and value of it, with the just estimate of things in it; any new evidence of frailty in ourselvess or others should be improved for this purpose. Do we mourn the loss of those who were dear to us? then let us prepare to follow them. Do we see youth in all its bloom and vigour nipped by the relentless hand of death? then let us in no condition be secure. Do we hear the groans of our departing friends, and the sighs of the living? let us attend to the one with submiffion, and to the other with sympathy and fellow feeling. Instead of putting the evil day afar off, let us endeavous to make it familiar to our thoughts, and so to employ our days and years as that the last of them may not be dreaded as evil, but as bringing us nearer the attainment of that supreme good and felicity, which all the injuries of time, all the changes of life, never can impair or destroy.

E S S A Y IV.

The same Subject continued.

Thursday, Jan. 23. 1766.

*Life has no Value, as an End, but Means :
An End deplorable ! a Means divine !*

YOUNG.

IT is a question that will admit of some dispute, whether, upon a proper survey of the condition of mankind, it will be found, that good preponderates evil in the present life; or, in other words, whether, upon the whole, there be more in it of happiness than of misery, so as to make it a state eligible for itself, without a view to any thing farther?

It would require a very minute scrutiny into the various circumstances and dispositions of men, to determine positively as to this; but if we judge from the experience of individuals, so far as we have access to be acquainted with it, our conclusion will probably be, that this life deserves no farther to be valued, than as we have therein the means of improving, for a state of higher felicity and perfection.

This is a view of human life, very necessary to prevent our making its enjoyments
or

or sufferings of more importance than they really are; and, in order to our having a proper view of its transitory nature in itself, so as not to put too high a value upon it, merely on its own account, we find that in the Sacred Writings, it is compared to whatever is most fleeting and showy, but perishing: It cometh forth as a flower, promises very fair in the beginning, and blooms with hope and expectation; presents many gay and lively prospects, and every thing is drest in the most gaudy colours. But, mark the issue! These soon vanish as the beauty of a flower; the bloom fades, the colours decay; it droops under the shower, or is driven by the storm; falls a prey to the hand of the plunderer, or withers of itself in the decline of the season, and at approach of the wintery blasts.

Let us but take a short survey of our own progress through life, and we shall soon see how applicable the similitude: How airy our schemes in the morning of life! How fond perhaps the expectations of those most nearly concerned in us! Imagination gilds the prospect, and paints it in the most flattering colours; the fairest side of things presents itself; every thought of care and trouble is banished, and the certain period of these joys and hopes is seldom reflected on.—Here therefore three considerations occur:

occur, which, if properly attended to, might be a mean of preventing these fatal delusions and mistakes.

First. That let our prospects in life be ever so promising, there is a certain period fixed to life itself, and all that can be therein enjoyed or expected. As we cannot add one cubit to our stature, so more can all the powers of wealth and medicine add one month, or day, or minute, to our lives, much less prolong them at pleasure.

The *second* consideration that occurs, is, that as the period of life now mentioned is certain, so we know not how early it may come, whether in the morning, in the evening, or at noon, at what hour of the day, or watch of the night; its coming some time or other is unavoidable, and we have no security against any time. Not that this is to sour our enjoyments, or slacken our diligence; but to moderate our pursuit of every thing in life, and make us to weigh its end.

A *third* thing to be here considered, is, that even in this short and very uncertain space to which our days are confined, our hopes and prospects may, by a thousand unforeseen events, be disappointed. Whatever depends on the will of others, or even on ourselves, is uncertain, and must in some degree be changeable. Whatever de-

pends

pends on the influence of causes unknown to us is uncertain ; and how great a share of what we enjoy or expect, depends on such causes as these ? How few of them whose operation is known to us ? And where they are in some measure known, how seldom are they at our command ? Hence we see how little knowledge we have to discern, or power to accomplish, and by how precarious a tenure we hold our all in life. Enough is seen to teach us the folly of trusting to obtain even a small share of what we may wish for therein ; or, when got, to retain it long, or, to have always the same relish and enjoyment of it.

The use to be made of these, and the like considerations, is the making a proper estimate of life and its enjoyments, with a view to the end for which they were given us ; and the improvement suited to it.

For if this life be so short, no part of it should be unemployed ; let us not make it shorter by idleness, and much less by ill employment, by doing what we would wish afterwards to be undone. How oft do we think with ourselves, that if the time past could be recalled, we would improve it much better than we did before ? If so then, let us improve the present time to the best advantage : It is this only that is ours ; it is dealt to us in small but precious moments,

ments, and to improve these is the only way of recalling the time that is past. In order to improve them therefore, we have need to review our past conduct, to correct our past errors, and form good resolutions for the future.

If this life be so short and uncertain, how comfortable is it to consider that it is not the whole of our existence. Let us then view it in its proper light, not as a state in itself compleat, but as a state of trial and probation for eternity; as the infancy of our being, in which our want of age and experience makes us unfit for entering as yet on the possession of our inheritance, and requires proper discipline and education, before we arrive at perfect manhood, and become fit for the exalted enjoyments and offices that hereafter await us.—Thus we see how our progress in true wisdom and mental improvement, carries its influence beyond our present state. But if in this our state of infancy and trial, no pains are taken to cultivate those habits of mind which are the proper foundations of happiness, what hopes can there be of our attaining it? as reasonably might we expect that a child brought up in all the arts of effeminacy and luxury, should distinguish himself by his future vigour and capacity for action.

Finally : If this life be so short, let nothing in it too much elevate or depress us, be the object of our fear or our confidence. How foolish would we reckon it, for a man under sentence of death against to-morrow, to be much concerned about his accommodation to-day ? How idle for a traveller to be much concerned about the complexion of every one he meets by the way ? Why should the transient occurrences of this life much affect us in our passage through it ? Why should we lay hold of any thing therein as a permanent good, or be as much disconcerted by any loss or suffering in life, as if it was never to have a period ?

Who then is the man who may be said to act wisely in this case ? Who the man that is least liable to disquietude and disappointment ? It is he who considers all human persons and things as changeable and fluctuating, GOD alone as abiding ; he who enjoys the company of his dearest friends as knowing he must one day part with them, and he who parts with them as knowing he shall one day meet with them again ; he who enjoys the advantages of this life as what he must resign, and he who resigns them with patience, in view of higher ; he who enjoys the favour of the great without being elevated or corrupted, and can bear their displeasure with the same equanimity.

Our

Our conclusion shall be in the words of that elegant writer who furnished our introduction to this Essay.

*Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,
Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.*

E S S A Y V.

The Jurisdiction of Time.—An Allegory.

January 30. 1766.

*—Carpe Diem quam minimum credula
Postero.* Hor.

“ This moment seize, nor trust in what’s to
“ come.”

SOON as the birth of *Nature* was made known, the generation of *Time* was likewise promulgated : Sprung from the same parent, they grew up together ; but *her* early beauty and fertility soon distinguished her ; while, for want of these, in his younger years *he* continued in obscurity ; his character not much known, nor his acquaintance cultivated ; he made himself, however, so necessary for carrying on her operations, that he came to be appointed High-

Steward of her household: No task could be prescribed, nor any scheme either of business or pleasure carried on without him. By his assiduity and impartiality in the administration of his office, he soon engaged the attention of all the other domesticks; his judgment was appealed to, and his favour courted; a sovereignty of power was also given him, to be co-extended with the dominion of Nature.

The first who had recourse to him were the votaries of *Pleasure*; these made up a considerable branch of the family under his management; for then it was only a family, tho' soon enlarged into an empire. The votaries of Pleasure were falsely so called, for Pleasure was not confined to them, either in respect of the pursuit or the attainment of it; their mistake in the pursuit, by a choice of such pleasures as had not the sanction of Time, was the reason of their obtaining ironically this appellation; the more therefore that they solicited the favour of the Steward, against his judgment and their own real interest, their suit was considered by him as the more perverse and undutiful, and it was rejected accordingly: They were not, however, diverted from their delusive pursuits by such expressions of his displeasure as were either past or expected; and as his presence, tho' fleetingly

ing and momentary, could not be evaded, his present indulgence satisfied them, however short its continuance ; and this indulgence was granted as long as a promiscuous distribution of his favours required it : But finding that such a momentary uncertain gratification was all that could be obtained, and even this accompanied with a continual dread of its being withdrawn, the votaries of Pleasure became, instead of suitors, professed enemies of *Time*, and by a dissipation of his gifts studied to despise and destroy him.

Such was also the event with respect to another numerous body of suitors equally unsuccessful, tho' not equally active, and distinguished by the name of the *Children of Idleness*. Tho' these were likewise of *Nature's* domesticks, yet their immediate ancestor was always known to be an enemy to *Time* : They inherited his hatred, but were remarkable for their impotence ; some favours indeed they would gladly have obtained, as they could not shake off their dependence on the Steward ; but there was a peculiarity in his form which always occasioned their disappointment ; there was only one lock of hair on his forehead, all behind was bald* ; and so quick were his motions, that without holding him by the forelock he could not be detained, nor any suit

overtake him : The Children of Idleness were neither nimble nor vigilant enough for this, and before their suit was ready to be presented, the opportunity was lost ; but as they seldom allowed themselves to think on consequences, however certain and important, no disappointment gave them much trouble, if it did not affect their present ease and security.

The Sons of *Mischief* made up another tribe of attendants ; unlucky indeed in their name, and unnatural in their character, tho' also claiming to be the offspring of *Nature* : They had more foresight than the votaries of Pleasure, and more vigour than the Children of Idleness ; they had also a juster value for *Time*, and watched every opportunity of seizing and gaining him to their party ; but tho' he often favoured their industry so far as to condescend to this, yet he never failed in the issue to turn their criminal designs against themselves ; so that though always doing something, either they themselves, or their labours, behoved at last to be undone.

Next to these were the *Slaves of Passion* ; eager and impetuous in their pursuits, they either anticipated the favours of Time, or bore with impatience his slow career ; slow as it appeared to them, by viewing him only in his approach, for in this light he seemed

seemed to move heavily, and his wings were artfully concealed ; but when so far past as to be viewed behind, his broad pinions were widely displayed, and his motions seemed rapid as the wind ; years, months and days *, (tho' his own avowed offspring) were obliged to fly before him, giving place to a new succession of the same progeny equally volatile and evanescent. *Passion* was a severe task-master ; he either found his slaves blind, or endeavoured to make them so ; hence the motions of Time escaped their discernment ; not that they undervalued his favour, but they studied to make it subservient to the haughty dictates of *Passion* ; and though they had not liberty enough to be idle, their employment of time was generally self-destructive, it was divided betwixt offending and repenting, one of them the work of days, and the other of years.

Near a-kin to these were the followers of *Fancy*, and their event often similar ; tho' the favour of *Time* was implored and made subservient to their labours. *Passion* was an imperious master, *Fancy* a capricious tutor. *Fashion* was the daughter of

Fancy

* The division of time into years, months, and days, has a foundation in Nature ; that into weeks must among Christians be ascribed to revelation ; among Egyptians, Chinese, and Indians, to some tradition older than the first dispersion of mankind.

Fancy, and had likewise her admirers. *Time* would give no lasting sanction to their de-
sultory pursuits, so that doing and undoing was their alternate employment.

The same eminence of office that creates enemies, draws likewise after it flatterers and friends. Hence the number of *Time-
Destroyers* was somewhat balanced by a groveling herd of Sycophants, known by the name of *Time-servers*; but as their service was soon found to be fickle and mercenary, they could get no fixed wages from the Steward.

Very different was his reception of others, who soon appeared to merit his friendship: Few as they were in number, they disdained the low arts of flattery; yet they claimed the protection of *Time*, as being of his kindred and friends. They consisted of two small families, not much distinguished by their rank or fortune: *Truth* and *Virtue* were their founders, and always in strict alliance with one another. They were indeed inseparable, and enjoyed every thing in common; there was also such a resemblance between them, that many people either mistook the one for the other, or reckoned them only one family. But though they always travelled together, their offices or departments were different: *Truth* saw into the most secret recesses of Nature, and
had

had always the place of guide ; Virtue, though not so quick-fighted, was strenuous in their mutual defence. They were both the offspring of Nature, in her early age of innocence, and as such claimed the favour of Time for themselves and their descendants. That favour should be granted, was not now the question ; but how to make it adequate to their desert. Time thought his own gifts insufficient, he therefore consigned them over to Immortality : The dominions of this potentate were nearly adjoining, but the entrance to them was steep and narrow ; of this Virtue was appointed the guardian, so that none could enter without his passport ; and Truth was made keeper of the records, while the empire of Nature endured.

Such were the numerous bands by which the favour of Time was solicited, and such his various appointments and decisions with respect to them. But the contention that appeared among others, whom he observed advancing towards him made some new formalities necessary for the support of his own authority.

E S S A Y VI.

The same Subject continued.

Thursday, Feb. 6. 1766.

—*Venit, ecce, optabile tempus!* OVID.
“ Time clears his way, and firm his Edicts stand.”

NATURE saw her family increasing, and enlarged her theatre for its reception ; on this (by her permission) *Time* erected his stage : On the right hand were spacious fields, adorned with perpetual verdure, and known by the name of the regions of *Immortality*. On the left was a stupendous precipice, hanging hideously over the pit of *Oblivion* : In the middle, between these, *Time* sat enthroned, holding a sceptre as the badge of his delegated authority, while ministers on each hand attended to execute his orders. *Fame*, as his herald, with laurel-crowns on the right leading to *Immortality* ; *Ignominy* and *Shame* on the left devoting to *Oblivion*. The banner of *Time* was displayed, and the various candidates appeared.

Arts and Sciences were then in their infancy ; they were begot by *Genius* upon *Industry* ; fair among the offspring of Nature and promising

promising *Immortality* to themselves and their progenitors : This however was not to be granted indiscriminately ; *Time* allowed them a fair hearing ; *Novelty* and *Utility* appeared to plead their cause. The plea of the first was rejected, but *Utility* soon obtained a favourable decree, and got his clients committed to the custody of *Fame* ; while they who had *Novelty* only to plead, were gradually justled to the left, and sunk unobserved into the pit of *Oblivion*.

The next that presented seemed to have more maturity of years ; he was grave and studious in his aspect, and masculine in his features, his name was *Learning*, and he pleaded his own cause. He claimed kindred and acquaintance with those who had been already so successful ; but it was asked, If they owed any thing to his friendship and assistance ? They immediately acknowledged his care, and owned him as their kinsman and guardian. Upon this, *Time* smiled on him with complacency, and he modestly touched the sceptre. *Fame* understood the signal, and wafted him to the regions of *Immortality*.

Encouraged by the success of the last, another candidate appeared. In his aspect and demeanour he seemed to resemble *Learning*, but it was only at first sight ; he had a supercilious look, and a strut peculiar

to himself; by these he was soon betrayed and known to be only *Pedantry*: He likewise attempted to plead his own cause; but was too scholastic to be understood. Confident, however, of success, he attempted to touch the sceptre: Time pushed him off with such violence, that he fell into the hands of the ministers on the left. Disconcerted by his fall, shame, for the first time, got the mastery of him; and, while endeavouring to give one lofty look back from the precipice, he was easily overthrown.

Amongst the crowd that surrounded the throne, one seemed more than ordinarily attentive, not so much to ask favours for himself, as to determine with respect to the merits of others; he was complained of as usurping the office of Time, and carried tumultuously to the bar; some called him Envy, others Prejudice; but, turning with indignation from his accusers, by the large spectacles he wore, Time soon knew him to be *Criticism*: “ I usurp not thy office (says “ he) O judge! I am only an enemy to other “ usurpers; those who accuse me are either “ ignorant or arrogant, and would have thy “ judgment anticipated in their own favour. “ With more courage than caution I with- “ stood them, and am therefore brought “ here as a criminal, and not as a candi- “ date. But I may claim the same honours
“ with

“ with Learning ; he has often been at my
“ school, sometimes indeed he has felt the
“ ferula, but my discipline has improved
“ him for Immortality.”

Time heard his defences patiently, and dismissed him with this advice : “ Take not
“ Envy or Prejudice for your counsellors,
“ and you shall not be involved in their
“ guilt. Beware of that ignorance and ar-
“ rogance with which you charge your op-
“ posers.—When Learning comes to your
“ school, let not false Taste be his tutor ;
“ leave dogmatism to pedagogues, and de-
“ traction to prudes ; but let Knowledge
“ and Candour be your associates, and you
“ may depend on my protection : I only
“ promise you immortality, according as
“ you contribute to help others to the at-
“ tainment of it.”

Thus the sentence of Criticism was pro-
nounced, and he was ready to depart from
the bar, when another prisoner was brought
forward, whom he knew to be his old friend
Satyr ; he had long been usher of his school,
and thrown from one class to another ; his
aspect was forbidding, and he was generally
dreaded for his severity. It was said that he was
the child of *Wit*, by a peevish wife whose name
was *Ill-nature*—that he had been nursed by
Discontent and *Disappointment*, in the bilious
regions of *Spleen*—that he had a sprightly

fister called *Raillery*, and that *Rudeness* was his brother; the former taking most of the father, and the latter, a great big boy, the favourite of his mother.—The whole family was more feared than loved, so that *Satyr* stood his tryal with some disadvantage: But Time, not influenced by popular prejudice, at his own desire, doomed him to sweep the stage. In the execution of this office he was often troublesome, and brushed without distinction his enemies and friends. Some he wantonly drove to the brink of the precipice, while others took sanctuary at the bar of Time; among the latter appeared his own parent *Wit*, with a rival known by the name of *Judgment*: Both of them complained of the last prisoner's officiousness, and both contended for admission to Immortality. *Wit* was of the family of *Fancy*, and often wore a female garb. Nature acknowledged his aid when decked to the greatest advantage*. This now was his principal plea, and urged with address and acuteness; but *Judgment* had more to plead than such outward decorations; he was known to be divine in his extract, claiming kindred to *Reason* and *Intellect*, while conformity

* True Wit is Nature, to Advantage dress;
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express.

POPE.

formity to his impartial dictates gave perfection to the offspring of Nature. Judgment got the sanction of Time, nor were the merits of Wit neglected; while friendly to Truth and to Virtue, he was allowed the Laurels of Fame.

The trial of *Beauty* was less serious; it was sentiment and not argument that she relied on: The graces of her person, and distinction due to her sex, easily procured her access to the bar.

*She appear'd in all her Virgin Charms,
While smiling CUPID revell'd in her Arms.*

Thus deemed invincible, she longed to be declared immortal. Much incense indeed she had received, and Time at first favoured her conquests; but fearing such a rival for empire, he artfully seized her young champion: His wings he clipped, his shafts he blunted, and left him to flutter harmless on the stage. *Beauty* seemed to think herself wounded, when her power of wounding ceased; but applying to *Virtue* for a passport, she got safe to the regions of *Immortality*.

While the ages of *Time* were revolving, his procedure seemed solemn and slow; kings, heroes, and statesmen came forward, appealing to his sovereign decree. Numerous was the next band of plaintiffs, and eager their contest at the bar; their opinions

ons and languages were different ; their aspect oft clouded with thought ; some took the name of *Authors*, and pleaded the stability of their works ; others, not so creative in their fancy, would, as *Writers*, claim the sanction of Time : Some of these were his occasional servants, and as such, had their wages assigned : The ministers of party they were deemed ; the transient meteors of Fame ; to be coeval with their temporary labours, and to shine till their parties expired.

While these venal tools of ambition strove to jostle one another off the stage, Integrity was often injured, and Innocence in danger of being infected ; *Genius* and *Industry* were either lost in the crowd, or with difficulty rescued from the pit of Oblivion. From the periodical increase of these corruptions, Time drew a proper antidote against them : Literary centinels were appointed, and their different posts assigned them : Occasional *Wainos* they might also be called ; but not of the ferule herd. Their abours, though likewise occasional, were more luminous and lasting. "To raise the *Genius* and to mend the *Heart*," was their province, and they were promised the sanction of Time while devoted to *Virtue* and *Truth*; their ministers they were, and would gladly have claimed their reward, that Virtue

ture should grant his passport, and Truth record them in the annals of Fame. An appeal was made to the Judge, and he issued this final decree, "That a proper attention to Time, would lead to Immortality."

E S S A Y VII.

On Patriotic, Political, and Humorous WRITING.

Thursday, Feb. 13. 1766.

O LIBERTY! O VIRTUE! O my COUNTRY!
Addison's Cato.

If the common impatience of readers, to get quickly at the general scope of what is before them, will allow of their glancing at this day's motto, or judging from it of their bill of fare for the time, I make no doubt but some of them will begin to suspect, that the *Remembrancer* has departed from his original plan, and fallen into the old beaten path of *Politicks*. I hope however very soon to make it appear that this suspicion is groundless; and, tho' I have cho-

seen this manner of introducing myself to the subject I have in my view; yet I cannot so far approve of violent pretensions of any kind, as to adopt the pompously pathetic style of those, who seem to think that they cannot sufficiently distinguish themselves for love of their country, without endeavouring on all occasions to magnify its danger; as if what an eminent wit ironically observed with respect to the church, above half a century ago, was to be always literally understood of the state, "That it " was in danger, ought to be in danger, " and that it would be dangerous for it not " to be in danger." This querulous or petulant humour, so enfeebling to government, and unfriendly to national spirit and enterprize, may be often an inlet to corruption, as the nearest way of quelling it, and is very different from the unconquerable spirit of the old Romans; when, after the memorable battle of Cannæ, they gave public thanks to their General, tho' he returned defeated, because he had not despaired of the republic.

For my own part, I have long thought religion and morality in much more immediate danger amongst us, than either liberty or property; but which must undoubtedly involve these at length in their ruins:

Nor

Nor can I help considering the pompous declamations and complaints of some, with respect to the two last, in much the same light as I do those of any actor who may happen to personate Cato on the stage, without any real feeling or impression of what he says, further than is necessary to gain some notice or applause from the audience.

Thus "the political world is a stage, and " all the men and women merely players." It is not my business or intention at present to expose them. I know that people in mask seldom love to be discovered, and have the charity to think that some who profess themselves to be patriots, are so in reality, and very probably are those who make the least noise with their profession, but are ready for action the moment that duty calls them to stand forth in defence of their King and country.

After so long a preamble, it is now high time that I should make known the subject I have at present in view, and to which I am engaged by the friendly admonitions contained in the following short epistle :

To the REMEMBRANCE.

SIR,—However much I confess myself pleased with your plan, and, hitherto, with the

the execution of it, yet I cannot help observing, that there is one material point necessary to be further attended to, in order to promote the success of your labours ; and that is, to engage the public attention so far as to procure them a reading from those who have most need to peruse them, and who, I find, will scarcely be persuaded to bestow a few minutes for this purpose, if they may expect to meet with nothing in them that relates either to *Politicks* or *Pleasure*. The latter I leave to the gay world to remind you of ; the former I only suggest as proper to be attended to, so far as religion or morality may be affected by them. And as it does not appear to me that you have declined to enter on the political stage, from any incapacity of acting some part upon it—even granting that you are above being influenced by motives of private utility only, it may be worth your while to consider, whether an enlargement of your plan may not likewise be for public benefit, and the more so that I find the sphere of its usefulness is enlarged beyond the circle of the Bath Chronicle, by your labours being allowed a place in one of the best weekly collections of the metropolis. If there is any presumption in my suggesting this, I hope the encouragement you gave to correspond with

with you, some weeks ago, will be a sufficient apology for
4th Feb. Your's, &c. POLYBIUS.

Having, agreeably to my promise soon after the commencement of my present literary office, communicated the sage advice of Polybius to the public, I shall endeavour to avail myself of it, only so far as the public emolument requires, without departing from my established plan; and shall therefore, in my next, offer a few thoughts on national or civil liberty, so far as national virtue and happiness may be affected by it.

As for schemes of private utility, I am well aware that this is not the way of promoting them; and that to volunteer it, as some do in the service of the public, without consulting the general taste, is often attended with inconvenience; but a consciousness of the rectitude of our intentions, will do more than balance it? And such as have a nearer view of the verge of life, and vanity of its prospects, are in less danger of having their inclinations warped by them, so far as to shake that integrity and independence of mind, which are the glory of any character, and will not fail of obtaining, in due time, their reward, but which are too often observed to be swallow-

ed

ed up when they approach too near the fatal Vortex of Politics.

In regard to that fidelity I owe my correspondents, by inserting such of their admonitions or informations as appear any way conducive to the success of my undertaking, I must next beg leave to communicate the advice of a fair correspondent, having always a particular deference for her sex, and an ambition of devoting my labours to their service.

To the REMEMBRANCE.

SIR,—Though I have now learned to spell the name by which you chuse to distinguish yourself, yet I cannot say I am as yet thoroughly reconciled to what you call your plan; I have reason to believe that I speak the sentiments of many others of your own sex as well as mine, when I tell you, that the being reminded of what is past, or warned of what is to come, are exercises too serious to be generally agreeable; and you seemed to be aware of it, when you promised something humorous to qualify them: It would be inconsistent with your avowed sincerity, to suppose that you would have made such a promise without some consciousness of your ability to accomplish it;

it; nor do you seem to be entirely destitute of talents for this, if we may judge from some of your Essays; but if your imaginary dignity will not allow you to stoop so far as to apply your talents for this purpose, your labours will be as much lost in respect of some who would wish to be your readers, as the stern precepts of antient Philosophers. I have been told, by a bookish old aunt of mine, that there was one of them who did nothing but weep, and another who did nothing but laugh. I would not wish you to take either of these for your pattern, but to have a mixture of them both: Or, if a preference must be given to one of them, my humble opinion is, that you will have more success in laughing us out of our follies, than by lamenting or mourning over them; and yet I cannot say that I have been made to laugh half a dozen times by all you have as yet offered for my entertainment. Your account of the trial of Beauty, pleases me: I was afraid you would not have brought her so well off; nor could you have been so lively and poetical in your description of her, without some experience of her influence. The Parson tells me there is something of wit runs through the whole of your two last papers, if I could find it out; but when I do not (as is often the case) it is all one to me

me as if there was no such thing. I think however, you seem to mean well; and if you do, you will not refuse to profit, even by the advice of a female correspondent, especially as you invited me to assume this character. If you are not a stranger to routs, and balls, and card-tables, let us hear something about them, and you will oblige your friend, if you engage her to continue your reader.

7th Feb.

HILARIA.

Amidst Hilaria's gaiety I have some reason to believe that her correspondence is a little indebted to the old aunt and parson, or at least that she has benefited by their preceeding instructions. There shall in due time be a proper regard paid to her admonitions; but she must remember that tho' we may be laught out of our follies, yet there must be a severer discipline for our vices. The former of these is all that I suppose my sprightly correspondent has been acquainted with, so that I excuse her not attending so much to the proper treatment of the latter. Neither of her friends could determine more judiciously as to the merits of the weeping and laughing philosophers, than she has done herself; mean time, let it be the subject of their mutual consideration and correspondence, how both characters may be most conveniently united in the *Remembrancer.*

E S S A Y VIII.

On LIBERTY: Its *Value, Origin, and Progress.*

Thursday, Feb. 20.. 1766.

Libertas, quæ sera, tamen respexit inertem.

VIRG.

“ Secure, at length, I hail kind Freedom’s sway.

ABOUT half-way from Venice to Rome, lies the small town of St Marino, often visited by those who travel through Italy, though not on the common road. The whole number of its inhabitants does not much exceed 5000, who are united into one small republic, with laws and magistrates peculiar to themselves, and distinct from the neighbouring states of Italy, though they are reckoned of the dukedom of Urbino.

The Village is situated mostly on one hill, remarkable for its barrenness and coldness, when compared to other towns at no great distance; but this unfavourableness of its situation, joined to the poverty and peaceableness of its inhabitants, seems to have secured them from the encroachments of the neighbouring states, so that they lay claim to a freedom and independency for upwards

wards of a thousand years back, save that they are under the protection of the Pope, tho' he does not claim any jurisdiction over them; nor have they ever sought to enlarge their territories, the whole of which will not measure above three English miles in length; and nine or ten round; and as they are not capable of further improvement by agriculture, nor conveniently situated for commerce or manufactures, the number of fixed inhabitants is generally much the same at all times; nor would they exchange their poverty and obscurity, for the most opulent and splendid residence in Europe.

The enjoyment they have of LIBERTY and *Independency*, is the only reason they assign for this.

The same has been sometimes remarked as the ground of that attachment which some remote islanders discover to their own society and dwellings; but this is the less to be wondered at in them, that they know little of any other habitations. With the inhabitants of St Marino however, this is not the case; for they see sufficient displays of luxury and grandeur when they travel but a few leagues, and yet the *Liberty* they enjoy at home, makes them always eager to return;

What

What is this LIBERTY, therefore, which has such powerful charms for making poverty, pain, and even death itself, sometimes eligible in its defence?

The name, in a more general sense, has been well known to moral writers in all ages and parts of the world: Jews, Greeks, and Indians, as well as the moralists of times and countries less remote, have been divided in their sentiments about moral *Liberty*; some maintaining it to be inconsistent with the divine Providence and prescience, and the influence that different motives seem to have necessarily upon the human will: Nor indeed can the manner in which it is reconcileable to all these be explained; but reject it we cannot, without destroying moral agency, and accountableness for our actions; and as for the influence of motives, if they are internal or rational, the being influenced by them is very consistent with moral liberty.

If we appeal to every man's experience and consciousness, there can be no doubt of our having a natural power to chuse or refuse, and to act or not to act accordingly, when under no outward restraint. This power we call *Liberty*, and it is enjoyed in its greatest perfection in a state of nature without any engagement in society, because there it has no other restraint than what a-

rises from the law of nature ; but in the freest society that can be supposed, it is restrained, or rather regulated by its laws likewise ; so that men do not enter into society to increase their Liberty, but to enjoy a smaller share of it with more security ; to secure their persons and property by renouncing a part of their liberty, or resigning their own will in some measure to that of the society they belong to. But man's natural desire of liberty would, no doubt, make that society the most desirable, in which most of it might be retained ; *i. e.* in which there was most of national and personal liberty.

That liberty which any nation or state enjoys from without, in respect of its neighbours, may be called national—that which its own constituent members enjoy among themselves, personal, and both concur to constitute civil or political liberty, the very essence of which consists in our having the protection of society, with as little encroachment as possible on our natural freedom and independency, or in having all the security to our persons and possessions that arises from the union of many, for mutual defence ; with as little restraint as possible from the interfering interests and inclinations of many thus united.

Hence

Hence we may observe, that tho' in the larger states or communities, there is more of safety or protection from without, than in small ones; yet, as there are more whose interests must be consulted, there must be more of restraint on the liberty of individuals; and that the more there is of union in the views or interests of individuals thus united, the restraint will be the less.

The want of this union in their views and interests has occasioned convulsions in many states otherwise well constituted, as in the case of the Patricians and Plebeians in Rome; to which we might add that of the nobles and commons, the civil and military powers, the church and state, the landed and trading interests, in various other communities.

With respect to that national liberty, which consists in the safety or protection of any state from without, it may also be observed, that it is not always diminished by whatever diminishes the internal or personal liberty of its subjects, or that exemption which it implies from a dependence upon the arbitrary will of their superiors or governors; and hence we see that some nations, where despotic government prevailed, have long preserved a freedom and independency with respect to their neighbours, and even extended their conquests over

E 3 them,

them, while their own subjects groaned under the yoke of slavery and tyranny. But when the finallest breach is made upon a constitution of this kind, or any advantage gained over it, such subjects were never found equally resolute in their own defence with those who had higher notions of internal liberty, and enjoyed the fruits of it : It is these only who have found *their lives in its possession happy, or their deaths glorious in its just defence.*

To trace the origin of *Civil Liberty*, as comprehending both what is called national and personal, the state and privileges of man by nature must be enquired into, and what it is that either gives or ought to give one man a superiority over another.

Nature seems originally to have established an equality among men, in respect of many particulars from which a distinction is afterwards acquired ; and an inequality in respect of others which do not always occasion or create such a distinction. That superiority therefore which arises from the appointment of Nature should be attended to, as being more friendly to liberty than what arises from birth, accident, or policy ; these give one man often a superiority over others in respect of riches, honours, or power, where Nature puts him on a level with them.

Nature

Nature acknowledges no civil distinction, but what arises from merit, and this merit has respect chiefly to *Genius*, *Industry*, and *VIRTUE*; either of these, and much more all united, give that superiority to one man over another, which is of Nature's appointment; so that whatever is acquired without these, must be reckoned adventitious or unnatural, and is not a sufficient foundation for such a superiority.

Without some subordination, or subjection of one man to another, no society could be established or supported; but when men began first to form themselves voluntarily into societies, no superiority would be easily admitted or yielded to, but what arose from merit in some of those respects mentioned. Superior genius or capacity would be acknowledged (for even Nature itself appears to have raised some above the common level in this respect) and much more so if these superior talents seemed to be improved by industry and experience; but if superior *VIRTUE* likewise appeared in the exercise or application of them, it would engage men to give up some part of their natural liberty and equality, for the sake of that benefit they might expect from subjection to such superior merit. Superior force might indeed have the same effect, of bringing some under subjection to others;

but

but we speak not at present of those cases in which liberty is violently invaded, but of those in which it is voluntarily resigned.

Parentage gives likewise a superiority, but this is only domestic, and implies no more than a right, or rather duty, on the side of the parents, to advise or direct the will of their children, till they are of an age and capacity fit for directing themselves; their will grows up, as it were, before their understandings, the immaturity of which is supplied by paternal instruction, but without any infringement on liberty, or any superiority inconsistent with that which is mentioned as given by Nature.

Tho' in the first formation of societies, a regard would probably be had to such a superiority, so far as it could be discovered and ascertained; yet to ascertain a superiority of merit, would, even then, and much more afterwards, be extremely difficult; envy or prejudice would reject many just claims to it; self-partiality, on the other hand, would make many claim it where it was not due, or annex it to the other distinctions mentioned, that arise from a superiority in respect of riches, outward honours, or power.

To obviate therefore the difficulty of ascertaining the distinctions of Nature, those of Policy were introduced. When Men are greed

greed to resign their natural liberty and equality, so far as to give up their own will and power to those of the society into which they entered, no more would probably be meant at first than either a majority or representation of those who were free members of such a society, and whose will was not to yield to every new emergency, but to be fixed by general established laws, extending to the variety of cases that might occur, (so far as human foresight could extend to them) and carrying in them all those marks of superiority which we mentioned as given by Nature to some individuals ; and which being thus supposed to be stamped or impressed upon the laws, must give them a title to obedience and subjection, without any other encroachment on men's natural liberty, than is fit for them to have for their own safety and benefit.

Thus the joint will of the society is expressed by the laws, and these become superiors ; but the power of the society must be likewise united for supporting and executing these laws internally, as well as for external protection and defence ; and for the readier exercise of this executive power in various emergencies, it must be committed to a few, whose authority cannot be limited in all cases, and on whom therefore

fore there must be more dependence for liberty; which would make it of the highest consequence to have this power committed to those only to whom Nature has given that superiority formerly mentioned, which best qualifies for the possession of it, by securing that liberty which is resigned to it, and claims its shelter and protection.

But as the love of power is almost as universal as the love of liberty, in order to prevent a dangerous competition for the power now mentioned, the policy of different states has established certain laws, by which it is transmitted, either hereditarily, or by election, as best suits the principles of their constitution; and whether the distinctions of policy, in this case, be always agreeable to those of Nature or not, yet the latter will, in the course of administration, have some influence and superiority of merit, either in the supreme or subordinate departments of government, and be generally admitted as the most desirable depositary of liberty.

After thus tracing the origin of civil liberty, it will be proper to consider its consequences, and how the various interests and pursuits of mankind are affected by it; but this must be the subject of another essay.

E S S A Y

E S S A Y IX.

On LIBERTY: Its *Nature, Restraints, and Influence.*

Thursday, February 27. 1766.

*Quæ fit Libertas quæris? Nulli rei servire, nulli
necessitati, nullis casibus; fortunæ in aequum
deducere.*

SENECA.

“ You ask, What is Liberty? It is an exemption
“ from all servitude, from all necessity, from all
“ casualty, and to be on equal terms with for-
“ tune itself.”

METAPHYSICAL refinements in philosophy, as well as politicks, have given rise to many questions, which common sense rejects. The existence of Natural Evil has been made a question by some; that of Moral Evil by others: But common sense still prevails so much over these false refinements in science, that we may consider the existence of evil as undeniable, and therefore the origin of it as no improper subject of inquiry: So far as it has respect to human nature, it is commonly and justly ascribed, not to any original depravity of its powers, but to the abuse of *Liberty* in their exercise.

Liberty, in every sense in which it is commonly understood and exercised, whe-
ther

ther moral or civil, is of such value, that, even with all its consequences, it is preferable to the want of it, *i. e.* in regard and subserviency to the ends of our present existence ; for, to ask, Why man was endowed with liberty of choice, when his abuse of it must be supposed foreseen with all its consequences ? would be asking, Why God made him as he is ? The Christian Revelation shews how the Divine Goodness is hereby more illustriously displayed, and likewise justifies the dictates of reason and experience, with respect to man's being so far a free agent, as is necessary to render him accountable for his actions : This free agency, however, or liberty of action, as it respects individuals, has been the subject of much dispute.

Man is, say some, as necessarily determined by inward motives of action, as if under the influence of outward force ; but experience proves the contrary ; he cannot indeed shew his liberty of indifference by acting in two contrary ways at the same time, but he can do it at different times, without a change of those motives, which, when internal, are consistent with the most perfect moral liberty ; its essence consists in a power of attending to those internal motives, and acting accordingly.

A brute is not capable of understanding, or, being influenced by such motives, and therefore

therefore cannot be called a free or moral agent ; but man is ; and, in this previous power, of attending, or not, to such motives, rather than in yielding afterwards insensibly, tho' not involuntarily, to their influence, it is probable that most of his moral liberty consists.

He is, upon the whole, at liberty to do even what appears to him evil as well as good ; a power which would be very dangerous to himself and others, in the possession of a being, so distinguished for his capacities, and yet so depraved as man is, were it not under some restraint ; an outward or physical restraint would counteract the wise ends of moral improvement and trial for which such a power was originally given him ; but there are various moral and civil restraints to which it is subject.

The first of these is from the law of nature, reason, and conscience ; the next is from interest and convenience ; both these restraints upon Liberty take place even in a state of nature *, and, instead of

Vol. I. F. implying

* In a state of nature, it may perhaps be said, that the Law of Nature would be no great restraint for want of an executive power to enforce it ; but in this state, i. e. before men were united in society, every man seems to have had this executive power, or a right to punish any manifest violation of the law of Nature ; and hence Cain

was

implying imperfection, are consistent with, and some of them necessary, to the most perfect moral liberty; in the enjoyment of which, even when engaged in society, with as few additional restraints as possible, seems to consist the most perfect civil or political liberty, comprehending (as was set forth in our last essay) both national or public liberty, and that which is private or personal.

That there should, in a social state, be some additional restraints upon liberty, from the municipal laws of society, is unavoidable; and as long as these are consistent with the restraints mentioned in a state of nature, which every reasonable creature ought to be subject to, the advantages of society abundantly compensate them, and the members of such a society may be said to be free; for they are subject to no laws but such as have their own consent and approbation, either tacit or expressed; but when the restraints, they are brought under, are either unreasonable and unnecessary, or uncertain and arbitrary, as not being limited by fixed laws, they cannot be said to be free, for the security of their persons and

was afraid that every one who found him would slay him: Such a fear might be mentioned as an additional restraint on liberty in a state of nature.

and possessions depends upon the arbitrary will of a superior ; they are brought under a subjection to his authority, in whatever way it is exercised, upon the proper exercise of which depends the safety and welfare of those who are subject to it, and who may enjoy many advantages under it, but cannot be said to enjoy that liberty we mentioned, by which they are freed from all restraint, except what arises from fixed laws, consented to and approved of by themselves.

The origin of this liberty we endeavoured to trace in our last Essay, and to shew its agreeableness to that equality which Nature has originally established among mankind, as also in what respect this has given any one a superiority over another, and how far liberty is influenced without being subverted by it.

Our next inquiry therefore shall be, what influence Civil or Political Liberty has upon the most valuable interests and pursuits of mankind, such as public peace and tranquillity, public spirit and resolution, commerce, agriculture, learning, and, particularly, how religion and virtue are influenced and affected by it. To say that none of these are consulted or favoured by any other kind of government but what is commonly called a free one, would be say-

ing too much ; on the contrary it may be affirmed, that any form of government is far preferable to anarchy, or the being without any government at all ; and that such a Freedom as takes place among the wild Arabians or Indians, is destructive of all those valuable interests we mentioned. History and experience would likewise warrant our asserting, that some of the advantages or pursuits mentioned, seem to have been more favoured or promoted by such established forms of government as were less consistent with Liberty, than by those who had more of it : But the question is, Which of them, upon the whole, does, in these respects, deserve the preference ?

First, with respect to public *Peace* and *tranquillity* from within, as well as *Safety* from without, they do not seem to depend so much upon the form of any government, as upon the administration of it, and the regard had to superior merit in those to whom such administration is committed, and who (let the form of government be what it will) cannot be fixed by immutable laws ; for let the supreme authority be vested in a few hands or in many, in a prince, a senate, or both, we generally find the burden of administration is devolved on others, whose offices make them dependent and responsible, as temporary ministers

lers or servants of the public ; and so, far as these are possessed of that merit formerly spoken of, which arises from superior talents, industry, and virtue, so far the public peace, safety, and tranquillity, will be secured under any form of government that prevails.

As to *public spirit* and resolution, however, the case is somewhat different ; for animating any public enterprise, and surmounting all the difficulties that may attend it, higher notions of liberty and property are necessary than can be found any where else but in free governments.

The same may be said of *Commerce* : It is indeed never so honourable in monarchies, for they require a different subordination of ranks, and a regard to birth and titles of distinction : But, though absolute monarchs may sometimes encourage it by their protection, and even by their example ; yet, as their protection can never equal that of established laws, there will always be such an apprehension and dread of its being withdrawn, as will damp the spirit of commerce ; for till property be secured, there will be no great desire of having it increased, unless by those who expect to increase their power with it, so far as to render themselves in some measure independent. This, with the blindness of avarice, are the only reasons

that can be given for the rapaciousness of some Turkish governors, whose riches have so often been their ruin. Even small republics do not afford sufficient security for encouraging the increase of property by commerce; nay their legislators (as in Sparta) have generally considered their poverty as of some consequence to their safety. Powerful republics therefore, or governments of a mixed form, but rather inclining to the side of liberty, have been always found most favourable to commerce, as might be exemplified in the case of Tyre and Carthage of old, and that of Venice, Genoa, and the United Provinces, in our own times. The application as to Britain is obvious, and has rendered it the envy of foreigners, as it has raised it above all the commercial states that ever existed.

All that has been observed of commerce, will hold as to *Manufactures* likewise; they go hand in hand, and are encouraged or depressed by the same causes.

As to *Agriculture*, there may be supposed some difference: Necessity will force some attention to it under many political disadvantages; but it is plain that not only what promotes this necessity, but likewise whatever secures property, or favours the transferring of it, must likewise be favourable to agriculture, and consequently to

Population,

Population, which is one of the greatest supports of any state, and yet generally very little attention given to promote it : What influence liberty has on it, may be judged of from comparing the little republic of St Marino, so populous for its extent and riches, with the fertile, but desolate Campagna of Rome. That slavery is an enemy to population, appears in the case of the West Indian negroes ; and even such unbounded liberty, as that of the uncivilized Americans, has the same effect, because it does not give that security and other assistance necessary to encourage industry ; but whatever government most effectually does this, will be always the most friendly to population. What influence liberty has on learning, religion, and virtue, shall be afterwards considered.

ESSAY

E S S A Y X.

On LIBERTY:—Its Influence on Learning, Religion, and Virtue, and its Corruptions into Licentiousness and Libertinism.

Thursday, March 6. 1766.

*Dexterior tamen hic, qui liber non erit, illis
Quorum animas & farre suo custodit & ære.*

JUVEN.

*He's more a Slave, who knows no self-command,
Than those who, sed and bought by him, his
purchase stand.*

LEARNING is of more consequence to the safety and happiness of any nation, than is commonly imagined; it tends to enlarge the mind, and to humanize the manners; as might be exemplified in the case of those nations or ages in which it has flourished most; but our present enquiry is, How far *Liberty* has any influence upon it? The liberty of savages is an enemy to it, for some kind of government is necessary both for its protection and encouragement.

Despotic government induces a slavish dependence and timidity of spirit likewise unfriendly to learning: It loves to breathe the

the air of freedom, both civil and intellectual, this being best suited to the flights of fancy and speculation, and from this the republic of letters had its name. There have been republics, however, in which learning made but little progress, and these have, as to moral and civil improvement, been always equally defective. A Carthaginian philosopher was thought a prodigy ; Carthaginian veracity and humanity were likewise in little repute.

A republic, merely commercial, may give some encouragement to mechanical arts, but very little to the liberal, and to sciences much less, unless the neighbourhood of other states, more attentive to works of genius, unconfined to present utility, raise that emulation which is one of the most powerful incentives to study, and which, as it has often occasioned the appearance of many learned men at one period, is very much promoted by such a free intercourse as took place among the different states in Greece of old, and those of all Europe for some time past : When this intercourse is interrupted by war, and little attention paid to literary productions, we see but few efforts of genius : *Silent inter arma togæ.*

Political liberty, personal security, and outward competency, are favourable to genius and literary improvement ; slavery, dependence,

dependence, indigence, and affluence, are all more or less pernicious to them. But there is a philosophical and critical liberty, which is here likewise of very great importance, as there is scarce any branch of learning and philosophy that has not suffered by too slavish a subjection to established systems and opinions, marring a free spirit of inquiry into truth.

The influence that *Liberty* has upon *Religion* and *Virtue*; shall conclude our present inquiry with respect to it. It is too common with political and moral writers to mention religion and virtue separately, but in their proper meaning and extent they are inseparable; and the same action, which, when performed from a religious principle or regard to the will of GOD, is reckoned religiously good, may, when a regard to our sense of its intrinsic excellence or fitness is the motive, be called virtuous or morally good; when a regard to honour or character, rather than to conscience or law, determines to it, it is speciously good; and when fear or interest is the principle, it may be said that it is politically good: But it is plain, that where the first of these principles operates, it must be the most uniform and inviolable in all times, places, and circumstances, (as depending less on the opinion or influence of others) and it is the want, weakness,

or abuse of this, which has occasioned the substituting other principles in its stead, even when they can have but a temporary effect without it.

Montesquieu mentions fear as the principle of obedience in a despotic, honour in a monarchical, and virtue in a republican or free government ; experience so far justifies this observation, that we may take it for granted, that civil liberty is favourable to virtue and likewise to religion ; but force or tyranny (which is the exercise of power beyond right) an enemy to both ; for their being voluntary, or the effect of free choice, is essential to them.

If, indeed, we could suppose any power upon earth, civil or ecclesiastical, to be infallible in its exercise and direction, it might be said that the interests of religion and virtue would be best secured by an implicit submission to it ; but, besides the absurdity of such a supposition, even this submission would destroy or supersede that exercise of our own will and judgment which is essential to these : It is the province of persuasive and not of coercive power to restrain or regulate the exercise of them, for the latter can never make a man alter his opinion, however much it may make him conceal or disguise it ; any attempt to support it by argument, cannot be effectually opposed but

by

by argument ; and where the liberty of the press is allowed, it is equally free to both.

Nor can we well suppose the interests of true religion and virtue to suffer by this, or that upon the most free and public inquiry there will in the end be more converts to error than to truth, or indeed any converts to error who would not have been so without such an inquiry ; it is the suppression, and not the permission of this, which would be subversive of religion and morality; but in cases where these are not concerned, and where the restraints of conscience can not be pleaded, their seeming indifference makes it easier for us to draw others over to our opinion, so that the propagation of it must be more dangerous if the case be such as affects the fundamental principles and constitution of that society, civil or ecclesiastic, to which we belong, by a tendency to withdraw ourselves or others from the allegiance due to it, or to those who lawfully exercise the supreme authority in it. Any attempt therefore to propagate opinions which have manifestly this tendency, will justify an outward restraint upon liberty, especially if they are accompanied with overt acts of disloyalty or disobedience ; and tho' the other cases mentioned do not seem to stand in need of a restraint of this kind from without, in matters of opinion alone, even when

when reckoned erroneous, yet it becomes necessary here likewise, if any practices follow that are irreligious or immoral, according to the degree in which the laws of God or society are violated by them.

If all civil restraints upon *Liberty* are taken away, it degenerates into *Licentiousness*; if all religious and moral restraints are removed, it takes the name of *Libertinism*: the former of these most commonly denotes the abuse of liberty in nations or communities, and the latter that abuse of it which has respect to individuals; but when they are carefully traced and compared, it will be found that they have a very great similarity in their nature and progress, and that instead of being conducive to the improvement of civil or moral liberty, they are most certainly destructive of both.

By the freedom of any state is commonly meant that of the people, or the inferior rank of subjects who enjoy any fixed property in it, not excepting even those who have the smallest share of this, but who claim the protection of the state to their persons and possessions, and contribute, according to their abilities, to its support; nor is the liberty of those who have power or authority over them excluded, but it is not thought to be so much in danger. It is not, however, from those only who are

of superior rank or authority, from the chief magistrates, monarchs, or nobles, that the liberty of the people is in danger ; for, though the most common encroachments on it have been from that quarter, yet it has often suffered, not only from an increase of power in the governors, but likewise from a contempt of authority in those who were governed; and who may be considered in two lights, either as a collective body, or through the medium of their representatives.

In the best constituted governments, the power of legislation has been always lodged in the hands of such representatives, with concurrence of the higher orders in the state; and where these are a proper balance to one another, and neither of them biased by an opinion of separate interest, nor overawed by superior force, the liberty and interests of the people will be secured ; but there is scarce an instance of legislative power lodged in the collective body of the people that has not been capriciously exercised and fatal to liberty, first by corrupting, or converting it into licentiousness, and thereafter by sacrificing it to usurpation or tyranny.

Thus when Athens was a popular state, and the legislative power lodged, not in representatives, but in the collective body of the

the people, we see what extravagant licentiousness they were led to ; the death of Socrates and banishment of Aristides are clear evidences of this. Many such evidences we have of the abuse of liberty by the collective body of the Roman people, when the exorbitance of their power occasioned their being courted and corrupted by their different leaders, who often introduced armed slaves and cunning seducers into their assemblies ; and to some of these leaders, they generally made a sacrifice of all that power and liberty which they seemed to hold so dear.

Such are the consequences to states, when, for want of the civil restraints necessary, liberty degenerates into licentiousness, and the like consequences to individuals, may be observed to ensue, when, for want of the moral restraints necessary, it degenerates into libertinism and profligacy. In states or communities we see that this abuse of liberty arises, from giving the mob a power which they are incapable to exercise : In the case of individuals, irregular appetites and passions may very justly be compared to the mob ; if they are kept under the restraints of reason and conscience, moral liberty is enjoyed in perfection; but, if these restraints be thrown off, it becomes the liberty of brutes, not of men, or rather it is shamefully resigned, and the

meanest slavery chosen in preference to it : No wonder therefore if disappointment should follow as to that happiness which arises from the proper exercise and enjoyment of moral liberty, or from that self-command (as it may be called) which consists in giving reason and conscience the superiority due to them.

Self-command is essentially necessary to inward or moral liberty, and it consists, more generally, in giving reason the command of our thoughts, affections, and actions ; but, more particularly, that self-command necessary to happiness and moral liberty, consists in the proper regulation of our desires, by proportioning them to the real value and importance of their objects, as they appear in the eye of reason, and not of fancy or passion.

The command of our desires, in general, is what constitutes *Contentment* : The command of our appetites, or those desires in particular which have respect to the body, is *Temperance* ; and the command of our aversions, *i. e.* resolutely encountering those calamities or sufferings to which we have most aversion, when necessary for great and virtuous ends, is what the ancient moralists seem to have understood by the cardinal virtue of *Fortitude* ; they also recommended moral aversion, as the first step necessary in order to moral improvement, *i. e.* that

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we must begin with rooting out vicious habits before the foundation can be cleared for cultivating virtuous affections and dispositions; that what enslaves the mind must be removed before it can be free.

A very little experience will shew the justice of this observation; but what we would chiefly observe at present, is, the importance of vigorously maintaining that command or government of ourselves which has respect to the various particulars now mentioned, if we would use our liberty in such a way as is most conducive to our perfection and happiness; and that whoever neglects this moral discipline and self-government, is (as an elegant satyrift observes in the motto of this essay) the unhappiest of all slaves; he has not only one, but a thousand capricious and tyrannical masters, whom he carries continually about with him, and whose desire of dominion is increased, instead of being satisfied, by every new sacrifice of our liberty, or every new act of submision to their authority.

What has been advanced in this and the two preceeding essays, with respect to civil and moral liberty, would admit of much enlargement, particularly by considering how the increase or decay of the former is affected by the different constitutions of government that we have access to be acquainted with; but this is a subject of political ra-

ther than of moral inquiry ; and, though the first principles of *Politicks*, are a proper subject of every man's study and attention, so far as religion, virtue, and the advantages of social life are influenced by them ; yet, the more minute consideration of them, by laying open the views and principles of the different parties they have given rise to in every state, is the proper task of statesmen, and of coffee-house politicians, who aim at being their associates ; nor will any sober dutiful subjects envy them this monopoly, or seek to have them deprived of it, while they seem to make a proper use of it for their common benefit. The *Remembrancer* in a particular manner disclaims it, as being no part of that province which he has chosen for himself, at present, upon finding it unoccupied by others.

E S S A Y XI.

Libertinism described; with the History of JACK FREEMAN.

Thursday, March 13. 1766.

—*Facilis est descensus Averni;
Noctes atque dies, patet atri janua Ditis:
At revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras:
Hoc opus, bic labor.*—

VIRG.

“ Smooth is the way to Pluto’s gloomy Shade;
“ And Hell’s black gates for ever stand dis-
play’d :
“ But it’s a Work of much Fatigue and Pain,
“ To climb to these æthereal heights again.

PITT’S VIRG.

IT is a very common and just observation, that a man, thoroughly vicious, is as rarely to be found, as one thoroughly virtuous; but it must not be supposed here, as in many other cases, that the middle between these two extremes is the safest; for, if vice be a real evil, (which few I hope will deny) we need not be afraid to fly too far from it; nor indeed is there any middle point, at which we either do or can stop: The man who seeks not to become better, is most certainly growing worse; if he is not advancing in virtue and religion,

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he must, in less or in more, be declining; the ascent is so steep, that there is no standing idle by the way, nor is it agreeable to the nature of man to be so; the most indolent that ever was, must think and act in some way or other, be it ever so trifling, hurtful, or hazardous.

Tho', therefore, the distribution of mankind, into virtuous and vicious, might be thought improper, if their being completely so was understood by it; yet they may very properly be divided into two classes, according to their aim and pursuit; the one of them struggling more or less for mastery, and the other ignobly declining the contest; the one gaining some ground, and the other gradually losing it: Not that their progress towards either of the extremes mentioned, is always sensibly and immediately felt by themselves, or perceived by others, more than the progress of their bodily strength and stature in youth, or the decays of age; but in time it becomes perceptible; and tho', in this respect, the bulk of mankind seem to be in a quiescent state, scarcely moving one way or another, yet, some change they must, in reality, be undergoing, however small, in respect of mind as well as of body; some motives they must have to virtue, and incentives to vice, and by the influence which these have, more or less, on their

their actions and dispositions, their progress is determined.

We are all, therefore, either advancing towards higher perfection, or gradually falling off; with this difference, that, in the former case, there must be many acts of self-denial, many wrong habits to get rid of, many passions and appetites to restrain, which will make the way seem unpleasant at the first entrance upon it, and in consequence of every deviation from it; but this is abundantly compensated, by that heartfelt joy and satisfaction which arise from the consciousness of making any progress; whereas, in the other case, there is less to do; the declivity of vice is easily descended, and, while corrupt habits and dispositions are indulged, they will give less trouble for the present, however ruinous and shameful the consequences: So that the Roman poet's beautiful description of his hero's passage to the regions below, may with some propriety be applied here. I have therefore prefixed it to this *Essay*, and am led into these reflections, by what was suggested in the conclusion of my last, with respect to *Libertinism* or profligacy, a character which, in its utmost extent, is, I hope, rarely to be met with; for it implies a man's throwing off the restraint of all laws human and di-

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vine, except what arises from the fear of certain and immediate punishment.

The compleat Libertine is one who lays down to himself no other rule of action but to gratify, without reserve, every appetite or passion that happens to be uppermost for the time; to gratify the brutal part of his nature, without regard to those principles by which it should be regulated and controlled: Indeed a brute is a much more innocent and harmless animal, he has not those superior principles, for enabling him to accomplish his lawless purposes, nor has he the abuse of them to answer for; and, where forcible restraint is necessary, it may, as to him, be more easily practised, than it can be with respect to the rational brute, as he may be called, who has just reason enough to make him the more dangerous and criminal.

We have heard of some, indeed, who seemed to pay little regard to reason or conscience, and yet a sense of honour, and some regard to character, kept them within bounds, so far as to save appearances in the sight of men; but the compleat Libertine, endeavours to lay aside this restraint likewise; after becoming regardless of the judgment of his own conscience, he becomes at length regardless of the judgment and opinion of others; he affects to be called a man.

a man of pleasure ; but, by the lawless and unbounded pursuit of it, his relish for true pleasure is impaired, his pursuit and enjoyment of it are often prevented, and the very principles of humanity in a great measure extinguished.

Such is the character of the compleat Libertine ; and tho' it is to be hoped, there are but very few to whom it is entirely applicable, yet the approaches to it are not so uncommon, as they are dangerous and alarming.

JACK FREEMAN was the only son of an indulgent and opulent father, and born heir of a considerable estate, in right of his mother ; their uncommon fondness for him in his infancy, was no further to be condemned, than as it laid a foundation for much unnecessary disquiet to themselves, and became too violent and visible, at an age when it might become hurtful to him : It is, indeed, difficult to fix the time when parental fondness should, for this reason, be either moderated or concealed, further than that it becomes necessary, as soon as, from repeated acts, it appears, that wrong habits, are forming, or wilfully persisted in : But as the towardliness of some dispositions makes indulgence less dangerous, and as the common partiality of parents inclines them to think that this is the case with those children whom they

they fondly love; *Jack* had the misfortune to be one of those, who was thought to be in no danger from such indulgence, so that it was continued much longer than was safe and prudent. His infant charms were indeed almost irresistible; but injudicious admiration begot a consciousness and high opinion of them, by which they were gradually lessened; while an impatience of contradiction, and a desire of contradicting others, seemed to increase with his years; so that at the age of eight, his mother dying, his father was easily prevailed upon to send him to a friend at a distance for his education, in hopes of its proceeding more successfully, upon his being removed from those, whose familiarity and fondness had made him in some measure ungovernable.

This change had, at first, the desired effect; *Jack* was more studious to please his new acquaintances, till he had once gained them; but this being attained, he became regardless of their advice and authority, further than that “he crept, like a snail, unwillingly to school.” His friend, who had the charge of him, being a man of business, was satisfied with recommending him to the care of his masters, and, tho’ he took some account of his proficiency in knowledge, he gave very little attention to the qualities of his heart.

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Such, indeed, was the quickness of *Jack's* parts, that the acquisition of knowledge was easy to him ; but, easy as it was, he could scarcely be prevailed upon to allow time enough for it, from the diversions he now began to have a relish for ; those of infancy and childhood, were exchanged for others a little more manly, and, an unbounded pursuit of them, led him to many little acts of dishonesty and inhumanity. His father became, at length, sensible, that it was proper to commit *Jack* to the care of a private tutor, who should consider him as his only charge, and have the authority and care of a parent, without any blind partiality in his favour. Such a tutor he got, when about the age of twelve, and one pretty well qualified for his office ; but he soon found, that *Jack* had been too long his own master. For three years, however, he made uncommon progress in knowledge ; but that vanity, and impatience of any restraint, which had been too much cherished by the tutors of his early years, began to gather strength as he approached to manhood, and came to know too much of the opulent and independent fortune that awaited him ; his love of innocent diversion, was succeeded by an unbounded love of pleasure ; and his restraint for some years past, which was rather too strict after so much previous indulgence,

dulgence, seemed to make his passions more ungovernable, when he came to have it more in his power to gratify them. This now became the case, by his being sent to the university without a tutor; it was his own desire, and his father was so far imposed upon by his late seeming regularity, as to yield to it; besides that new connections seemed to have lessened his fondness and anxiety about him.

When removed to the university, Jack seemed at first to deliberate about his future regularity; but the pause was short, and his resolution appeared from the choice made of his companions. The most profligate and undeserving, were the most forward to sollicit his acquaintance; and, tho' he at first associated himself with those who were most regular among them, yet, before three terms were elapsed, he became initiated in all the academical mysteries of vice: Not that his academical attendance could be charged with this, for he made such attendance very easy to himself; but some books of an irreligious and immoral tendency, inflamed his passions and polluted his imagination, while an immoderate fondness for those fashionable exercises, which, when properly regulated, are necessary for youth, had occasioned his associating with all who seemed to excel in these, however despicable otherwise.

otherwise as to what adorns the mind and the manners.

The liberal supplies of money, which *Jack* could easily command, enabled him to distinguish himself among those of this inferior class ; and the enjoyment of this distinction, together with their subserviency to his pleasures, and imitation of his example, gradually corrupted that sense of right and wrong, by which he had at first been in some measure restrained. It was long before his masters would lose their hopes of reclaiming him, and still longer before they could resolve upon informing his father ; but a low intrigue, in which he was concerned, and which was likely to end in marriage, occasioned, at length, Mr Freeman's being made acquainted with his son's misconduct, and calling him to London to be under his own immediate tuition.

He was then about eighteen ; and as he had some dependence on his father, while under age, was, for the other three years, kept under pretty strict restraint. But this was soon thrown off, upon his coming to an independent fortune ; and young Mr Freeman became again distinguished among the debauchees and gamblers of the town. The company of ladies of character he gave up as too delicate for him, and that of men of virtue as insipid to his taste. It would

be tedious to relate his various nocturnal rambles and rencounters; further than that, by a few years of debauchery and dissipation, his very features, as well as his sentiments, seemed to be altered; that sweetness and sprightliness, which, in his younger years, had procured him too much indulgence to his faults, seemed to be changed into a gloomy dissatisfaction with himself, and brutal insensibility of his injuries to others; faithless to his engagements, he made two low marriages in the course of six weeks, and, upon a discovery being made, and prosecution threatened, went over with one of his female companions to Hamburgh, where, friendless and forlorn, he first felt the grips of poverty: For want of regular remittances, he had recourse to unlawful practices for supporting himself, and being soon taken up, ended his days in a jail.

The history of this young Libertine is so much the more remarkable, as he had some advantages, in point of education, beyond many others of that class; but there were few or no efforts on his own part to improve them; nor is it only what needs to be improved, that ought, in forming the minds of youth, to be attended to, but likewise what to be corrected and restrained, even in infancy and childhood; and when they

they are far advanced, the making this restraint, rather the effect of their own reason and choice, than of any outward influence, which cannot always be continued. An unbounded love of sensual pleasure, is not so effectually restrained, by withholding the means of gratifying it, as by exciting and cherishing a taste for pleasure of a more refined nature, and leading to associate with those, who, by their example, rather than authority, may engage to the pursuit of it; from the pleasures of sense, the transition is easiest at first to those of the imagination; and when from this the mind rises to a relish for the more sublime delights of reason and religion, there will be little danger of pursuing pleasure, by plunging with the Libertine into the mire of sensuality.

E S S A Y XII.

The Art of TEACHING, both in a Literary and in a Familiar way, with an Example of it in Sophronius.

Thursday, March 20. 1766.

*Men must be taught, as if you taught them not;
And Things not known, propos'd as Things forgot.*
POPE.

SOCRATES was pronounced, by the oracle of Delphos, the wisest man among the Greeks, because all the account he made of his own knowledge, was, *that he knew nothing* ; he knew how little is to be known. The world is now upwards of two thousand years older than it was in the days of this wise man, and yet many have the presumption to doubt if mankind in general be much wiser now than they were then ; years, say they, bring experience, but years bring dotage ; and may not such an exuberance of knowledge, such a multiplicity of studies and inventions, as the world is now crowded with, contribute to this ?

Leaving this point, however, to the decision of those, whose knowledge of mankind, in all ages and nations, is extensive enough to determine it ; I shall only observe, that, were

Were we to judge of the number of wise men now amongst us, from the humble opinion they have of their own knowledge, we should find few modest and self-denied enough to be reputed truly wise ; but, if we leave this method of judging to crafty oracles, and take the argument in a different light, we must undoubtedly conclude, that the world was never more wise than it is now, for it was never more unwilling to be taught : To pretend teaching any man his own business, or even to enter into any discussion of it before him, might be acknowledged to be ill breeding all the world over ; were it not that every man knows so much of every thing, that he makes every man's business his own ; and, if you seem to doubt his being master of it, he can easily reject you as an incompetent judge in the case.

Next to this unteachable humour, none perhaps is so prevalent as that of teaching others : Every capital study has its doctors ; and in conversation, where no study is thought necessary, every man thinks himself at liberty to assume the office.—*Let such teach others, who themselves excel,* may be a tolerable good rule, and admitted by some as fair dealing ; but those who take upon them to teach, without such excellence, may be justly complained of, as mistaking their class, and taking upon them to

to be masters, when they should be only scholars ; or even allowing any to excel, it may be said that this neither gives him a right to teach others, nor obliges them to submit to his dictatorial authority.

For these reasons it is, that a teacher must sometimes (agreeably to the ingenious Poet's observation hereto prefixed) shelter himself under the name of a rambler, an idler, or perhaps a remembrancer, and propose things unknown, as if they were only things forgot : The world is now, however, so quick-sighted in seeing through these disguises, that it would not be safe to trust entirely to any of them for protection ; so that whoever finds himself prompted either by vanity, spleen, or zeal for the welfare of others, to promote their instruction and reformation, would do well to attend to the following short and necessary cautions.

First, let him make himself as independent as possible of those whom he means to teach. Independence, either from without or from within, is necessary, but it must not degenerate into arrogance or insolence. Disinterested benevolence (so justly celebrated by moralists) is likewise here particularly necessary, that the teacher may have some reward from the consciousness of his meaning well, whatever may be the success or reception of his labours.

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Another way, in which he should endeavour to indemnify himself, if he complains of the unteachableness or ingratitude of others, is, to benefit by his own precepts, or to reduce them to practice himself; a precaution highly necessary, both for his own sake and theirs: But as a very slight miscarriage, or inattention in this way, may discredit his instructions, there is one other precaution, which some have found convenient, and that is, the keeping themselves, as much as possible, unknown to those over whom they would wish to preserve the authority of their precepts, and whose reverence for them may be endangered by too much acquaintance and familiarity.

Solomon observes, that *a little folly will serve to discredit him who is in reputation for wisdom*; and so desirous are we to reduce others to our own level, if not below it, that any elevation of a man's character seems to set up a magnifying glass for viewing his follies and his faults: For the same reason, therefore, that the antient Eastern monarchs avoided being seen in public, his spectatorial Majesty concealed himself, under the mask of a short phiz, when he took upon him to instruct the public; and whoever aspire to the dignity of doctors, in any branch of science, would do well to have some such masks prepared for their future

futare concealment : The invention and proper distribution of these might afford some exercise of their ingenuity ; but hitherto so little has appeared of it, that they seem to be all satisfied with putting on the same mask of solemnity and reserve, how soon ever this dignity is obtained ; as if the first thing necessary, upon commencing a professed teacher, was silence ; in like manner as it is often one of the first privileges claimed by the metropolitan, to be excused from 'preaching.'

But leaving all these dignified teachers to take their own way, what deserves the particular attention of society is, the familiar art of teaching in conversation, or gaining others over to our sentiments ; neither loquacity nor vociferation alone will do the business, and yet some degree of these are often necessary : To understand well the subject in dispute, and the precise point on which it turns, should be the first endeavour of any who aim at excelling in this way ; a command of words and of temper must be added, and, along with these, such an appearance of impartiality, as may remove all suspicion of any other design than the discovery and support of truth : But all these qualifications together, will not make up for any affectation of superiority over those who are to be informed and convin-

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eed ; so that the more there appears to be any title to this, there must be the more of modesty, in utterly disclaiming it, and especially if there is the least insinuation of any thing, in the way of reproof or admonition, to be thus conveyed ; for nothing has more the appearance of this hated superiority in others, than their pretending to admonish or reprove us ; and the more there is a consciousness of its being merited, it will generally be the more unacceptable and provoking.

SOPHRONIUS is one of those, whose address and success in the familiar way of communicating instruction, I have always particularly admired. After a large circle in a coffee-house has been long kept in suspense, and unable to determine as to the merits of two disputants, I have heard *Sophronius* hit so exactly the precise point on which the debate turned, that with a few words he put an end to it. When Quintilian observes, as a distinguishing character of Cicero's orations, that they were so full that nothing could be added to them ; he at the same time observes as to those of Demosthenes, that nothing could be taken from them ; that he had words enough, and no more : This is what may, with justice, be said of *Sophronius* ; he can be either copious and fluent as *Cicero*, or concise and thundering

dering as Demosthenes ; but his common rule is, to use no more words, on any occasion, than are necessary ; and as his ideas are clear, his expressions are so likewise ; neither the one nor the other are obscured by these mists of passion with which colloquial disputants are so often enveloped, and by which their meaning is often hid from themselves and from others.

Sophronius, on the contrary, by commanding his own temper, commands the attention, and even the conviction, of his hearers : Slave to no sect, bigotted by no party, he allows every one's arguments their proper weight, and commonly recapitulates those in the opposition to him, before his own opinion is declared ; when he does declare it, it is with becoming modesty, and with all proper allowances for those who differ from him ; when the case is dubious, he does not pretend to be decisive ; when it is mysterious, he is silent ; and when it appears trivial, he makes use of raillery and good humour, without any airs of solemnity in discussing it ; but he never represents that as trivial, which is in itself important, in respect of the private or public interests of others ; and tho' his opinion is never given with any dogmatical arrogance, there appears in his way of delivering it, a consciousness of his ability to support it ; this consciousness

consciousness is generally known to be so well founded, that he often gains assent before his arguments are produced: He never uses a simile, in the place of an argument; and when improperly used by others, he often pushes it to an absurdity: His wit indeed might be dreaded, if accompanied with ill-nature; but he never fails to employ it in defence of oppressed modesty and merit.

The art of conveying reproof, *Sophronius* is particularly happy in; he is unwilling to undertake it, and is as general and secret with it as possible, while this seems to be sufficient; but when it is necessary to be more open and particular, he makes it evident that passion or interest are not his incitements to it, and endeavours to make his affection and regard unquestionable, before he communicates his reproof. He often begins with an acknowledgment of something faulty in himself, or with reproving those whom he can use most freedom with, for the benefit of others, to whom such freedom might be unacceptable: I have known him to correct vice, by commanding the contrary virtue; to bring about the performance of a good action, by only supposing it to have been done; and to cherish a good disposition, by a commendation of it in those who had, indeed, some, but no

great pretensions to it. He brought a young gentleman to abstain from swearing, by a genteel compliment upon his being believed without it; and another from dealing too much in the marvellous, by a hint that if any other had said it he would not be believed: Tho', only a by-stander, he once put a stop to the success of a very plausible gamester at Tunbridge, by gravely telling him that he had forgot to replace the cards, after being cut; the gentleman thanked him, but was from that time disappointed of some of the matadores, which he used dexterously to convey into his own hand when he dealt.

Sophronius is remarkably careful to avoid argumentation with the fair sex. Pope has told us, that men are to be taught, as if you taught them not: How women are to be taught, he says not, but seems rather at a loss what character to give them, or in what predicament to place them; the honour of this discovery was reserved for Sophronius: For teaching the ladies, he submits to be taught by them; and has the art of making them follow, by giving them the lead: that is, he makes every thing come of themselves; he brought *Miss Ogle* to behave tolerably at church, by employing her to reprove others for their misbehaviour; and made *Emilia* despise *Mr Flippant*, by engaging

ging her in an argument with him about taste ; his own esteem and affection were long fixed on the incomparable *Lucinda* ; but, before he made proposals to her, she was upon the point of employing another to persuade him to make them.

The improvement of the Ladies, even in solid knowledge, *Sophronius* is far from making light of, but considers it as of importance, both to themselves and their admirers ; he not only employs his own literary talents for this purpose, but is likewise at pains to point out what most deserves their notice in the compositions of others ; what tends to correct the fancy, to regulate the passions, and improve the heart ; not forgetting whatever is necessary to qualify for domestic life. *Miss Sparkle* will ever consider herself as indebted to him for his remarks on the *Fair Penitent* ; *Lady Brilliant* might likewise have had more reason to thank him, had his literary favours been accepted, and another gem added to brighten the lustre of her character.

Tho' *Sophronius* chuses rather to be humorous, than over-serious in his arguments with the ladies, yet he endeavours often to introduce them both as hearers and judges of his reasonings with others ; the uprightness of his intentions generally procures

him a favourable hearing ; and tho' he may sometimes fail of success, yet he always endeavours to deserve it.

E S S A Y XIII.

On the LOVE of VARIETY,—Its Prevalence, Use, and Abuse.

Thursday, March 27. 1766.

*Mille hominum species, & rerum discolor usus.
Velle suum cuique est, nec voto vivitur uno.*

PERSIUS.

“ Thro’ all the kind, thro’ Nature’s numerous sons,
“ Look ; and you’ll see no general impalfe runs a
“ A different bias in each breast you trace ;
“ You find the brains as various as the faces.”

BACCHUS.

THE Love of VARIETY is a most universal passion, insensible oft times in its operations, but important in its consequences ; it is not indeed the subject I have now chiefly in my view, but it is what very much engages me to depart from my last ; and as I have once begun with it, by way

way of preamble, it may possibly draw more attention, than was at first proposed.

I am no slave to my appetites, (says *EPULUS*) but I own that variety pleases me, in every kind of entertainment. Let physicians and philosophers say what they will, we may hold by their practice, in defiance of their precepts. I'll venture to say of my taste, that it becomes every day more general, and even our once abstemious neighbours of North Britain begin to conform to it; I now think well of them, and hope they will always continue to despise the homely simplicity of their ancestors.

Delightful variety! (cries *FLIRTILLA*) how insipid would life be without a change of diversions! We may judge of this, adds she, from finding how heavily we pass our Sundays; when, with a view, I suppose, to make us think once a week, these harmless amusements are cruelly denied us. Mrs *Meanwell* tells me, it is always Sunday in heaven; but of this I pretend not to have any conception; and even she herself has her taste for variety, else Mr *Frigid*'s discourses would be always enough for her, without wandering after other preachers, not near so handsome.

AQUARIUS is another, who is often heard declaiming on the same subject; he can tell you the various ways of living, at all

the noted medicinal springs in Europe ; to those of Britain, his own experience extends, and he can calculate, to a fraction, the expense of each. BATH is his head quarters ; but though he cannot say his health is bad, yet the desire of making it better has driven him, for variety, from Bath to Tunbridge, Scarborough, and the whole round of the watery element. His longest pause was on the banks of the Tweed ; but, for the sake of variety, he ventured far to the north of it, and returned with encomiums on Scotch heroism and hospitality. He is now meditating an excursion to the continent, still in search of variety, without changing his element.

But, to be a little more serious, it must be owned, that the *Love of Variety* is so prevalent and insinuating, as to make some attention necessary to the regulation of it. The speculative man would need to beware of it, in pushing his researches from one study to another ; and the active projector, who must give it more indulgence, would do well to watch over its desultory machinations. It introduces new systems, in law, physic, and politics, almost with every new century, when no just reason can be assigned why the old ones are exploded. In the more sublime studies of divinity and morality, it might indeed be thought, that there would

would be less danger of such changes ; and yet even here it has no small influence ; new opinions and controversies arise, new corruptions and abuses creep in, which cannot be well accounted for otherwise. As to this we must further observe, that those who address themselves to the passions, even for the instruction of others, would do well to have regard to this passion for variety. Let the same instructions be often repeated, with the same cadence of voice, or monotony, and we shall find that even their importance will not be sufficient to command attention. Neither a suppliant nor an orator can thus uniformly proceed, without a sensibility diversified according to the difference of cases ; and hence it is that a lively and ready elocution has so much advantage over the most elaborate but formal declamations.

The love of variety has been always remarked, as having particular influence on our search after happiness ; but this is chiefly to be understood of that happiness, which has respect to external and sensible enjoyments ; if these are not diversified, it occasions a satiety, which can only be prevented by the change or interruption of them : Even moderate pain is, in some measure, compensated by the pleasure that is felt on its being removed. The man who

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was never sick, scarcely knows the value or true enjoyment of health ; and the man who never underwent much bodily fatigue, knows not the exquisite pleasure of rest after it. Thus the short absence of a friend, makes his company the more desirable ; and a short retirement to the country, heightens the pleasures of the town.

That condition of life cannot indeed be assigned, for which we could long have a relish without variety ; was I to moralize upon this, I would say, that it argues both the activity of the human mind, and the vanity of all human things. In this, and every branch of the mental œconomy, evidences of wisdom and design are manifest ; our present state is an imperfect one, but the powers now given us, and the principles implanted in us, are such as, when properly exercised, lead to higher perfection ; whatever strength reason may hereafter acquire, it is plain that at present it is too weak for exciting to action, when there are many difficulties in the way ; passions are therefore given as its auxiliaries, they magnify the importance of objects, and quicken all our active powers in the pursuit of them ; reason discovers what objects are good or evil, but passion makes their good or evil more interesting to us ; " Reason is the " card, but Passion is the gale."

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To promote, therefore, that activity which is necessary to improvement, is the proper end and office of passion, as well as to add to our enjoyment on attaining the good, or averting the evil which it has respect to: That *Love of Variety*, which we are now speaking of, is particularly conducive to those ends; and, like our other passions, it is virtuous or vicious according to the degree in which it contributes to promote them.

As all our passions have a dependence on *Fancy*, the love of variety is particularly influenced by it. Our present state is a mixed one, partaking both of what is spiritual and of what is sensible; though reason therefore should be the ruling principle, it is not the only one at present implanted in us; to be guided by reason alone, our nature must have been made to approach nearer to that of spirits; the perfection of reason is reserved, for a region of pure intelligence; this is its present aim, but not its attainment; and fancy, purified and corrected, will always co-operate with it. Were we to distinguish nicely here, we might say, that *Uniformity* is the child of reason, and *Variety* the creature of fancy; but it is not my present intention to prosecute the subject in this philosophical light, further than is necessary to shew the usefulness and importance of that principle, which we are

now

now considering, when it is properly regulated, both for exciting to action, and for heightening enjoyment.

For regulating this, or any other passion, we must attend not only to the use, but likewise to the abuse of it; and the love of variety may be said to be abused, when it degenerates into a *Love of Change* and of *Novelty*. An immoderate love of change, takes from the relish of what we enjoy, much more than it adds to what we expect, though, for attaining this, it often precipitates into the use of such means as are neither proper nor justifiable. The love of novelty is nearly allied to this, and may, in a moderate degree, be useful; but when carried too far, it has the same bad effects that were now mentioned, and prevents that settlement of mind which is always necessary, both for our improvement and our comfort.

The *Passion for Gaming* may, in some sense, be considered as another corruption of the love of variety; from this indeed it may in some measure take its rise, as in all games of hazard the variety is unlimited; but if this alone was the source of it, the passion might be gratified, with very little expence; for the value of the stake adds not to the variety of the game; if this alone was the source, it would likewise be more easily

readily governed, and yield sooner to the influence of principles that are more important.

We might therefore name two or three other sources, that come in aid of this, and by which the passion for gaming is either occasioned or heightened. One of these is *Idleness* and vacuity of thought, which leaves the mind open to every trivial intruder. Another is, the *Fear* of such thoughts as might disturb us; for the suppression of which, recourse is often had to game. And, if we narrowly examine, it will probably be found, that *Avarice* has often some influence in exciting to it; not to mention how many become enslaved to it, merely from the influence of fashion and example.

The influence of *Fashion*, and the various changes introduced by it, may in some measure be accounted for, from what has been suggested. Fashion extends not only to dress and equipage, but to all that may be called rather the conveniences than the necessaries of life, and to those modes of behaviour, which may be considered as ornamental to it, rather than to those duties which are essential and immutable. Whatever is regulated by imagination and opinion, is the proper object of fashion, and not what comes under the cognizance of reason and judgment. In this sense it may be said, that

that there is no nation so savage, as not to have some regard to fashion, however absurd that of one may appear to another, and even to those of the same nation at a different period. Where, therefore, neither interest nor convenience are concerned, the only way in which we can account for the introduction of new fashions, is, by ascribing them to the love of variety, of change, or of novelty, always ready to operate when the opinion or example of others appear to justify it; but, were we to suppose a nation, having no intercourse with others, this love of variety would have less assistance, and there would be fewer changes of fashion, except what took their rise from interest, expediency, or policy.

Our observations with respect to fashion, and how far the love of variety influences it, might be confirmed by many examples, if necessary; but there appears so little necessity for this, that we may proceed to take notice of one other particular already hinted at, and all along in our view, but which, after being so long in preliminaries, cannot now be discussed, further than that it seems easily deducible from the whole of our inquiry; and that is, that the love of variety, which so generally predominates, proves all human things to be vain and unsatisfying. The scene may indeed be often shifted, and one vanity supplant another; but it

it seems none of them are commensurate to the desires of the human heart, and whoever would confine it to these, is left to find himself disappointed. The man of pleasure may take the whole round of it for variety ; he will find that it lasts no longer than the appetite, and that it cannot be heightened without some previous pain to be removed ; besides that this round is far from being unlimited, and, as the pleasure of variety is lessened by repetition, the choice of objects will become still more difficult, the less that there is of this variety to determine it. The different pursuits of knowledge, fame, power, and riches, when varied in the same manner for gratifying desire, prove only that the objects pursued are vain and incommensurate to it, and that to regulate or conquer desire, is generally easier and safer than to gratify it.

E S S A Y XIV.

On the Variety of HUMAN CHARACTERS, and Conclusion from it.

Thursday, April 3. 1766.

Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo? HOR.
" What Chains can bind
" These various Forms; this Proteus of the Mind?"
FRANCIS.

THE answer given by *Hamlet* Prince of Denmark to his mother, when expostulating with him about his seeming melancholy, deserves some attention in a moral as well as critical view of it. " Seems, " Madam, (he replies) nay it is, I know not " seems." The admired Shakespear could not better express, in a few words, that plain but full dignify of sentiment, which is suited to the character maintained by the hero of this dramatic performance. The reason, however, of my taking notice of this passage at present, is not merely to point out its propriety, so far as either Hamlet's character, or Shakespear's, is concerned; but rather, in order to extend the observation to mankind in general, by considering the variety of their characters real and assumed.

An

An antient moralist has observed, that every man has two characters; the first a general one, common to him with all others, and the second particular, distinguishing him from them; in like manner as there is a bodily shape and structure common to all men, and yet a diversity of features and complexion by which one is distinguished from another. This hint may enable us to determine, wherein that *knowledge of mankind* consists, which is justly considered as of great importance in life, and by the imagined attainment of which, some comfort themselves amidst the neglect of other valuable acquisitions: We have not minded books or busines, (they will tell you) we have lost some time and money; but we have this advantage above many others, that we have got more experience, and acquaintance with the world.

To *know Mankind*, or to *know the World*, is an expression of various and sometimes equivocal import; cunning, suspicion, and even the being initiated in the vicious practices of the world, some consider as implied in it. This is a knowledge of the world, very little to be desired; but, that sagacity and prudence, experience and common-sense, are all here implied, is undeniable; the application of all these therefore, or to investigate the object, about which they are,

in this case, to be exercised, is one great step to the attainment of the knowledge in question.

Know thyself, and reverence thyself, were, and always will be considered, as precepts of the highest moral importance ; without a man's having this knowledge of his own character, he will be ill qualified to acquire a just knowledge of others, or to improve it for the most valuable purposes of life : But the knowledge of *others*, is, no doubt, chiefly meant, when we speak of knowing mankind, or of knowing the world, and the knowledge, either of ourselves or of others, requires much more than our knowing that general character mentioned, in which we all agree ; it consists chiefly in a nice discernment of that individualizing character, by which any man is distinguished from every one living of the same species ; a discernment of those passions, affections, and dispositions, which naturally predominate most with him, the habits he has acquired, the ends he has most in view, and the motives that generally influence his conduct. A just knowledge of these will enable us, in many cases, to foretell what part he will act in the different circumstances that occur ; and, by an induction and comparison of various cases, we may, from our acquaintance with individuals, rise to the knowledge of the world,

so

So as to lay down to ourselves proper maxims of conduct, in the common intercourse and offices of life ; this is a good foundation for some higher advances in this science of human life, which remain to be considered.

If no more was necessary to the knowledge of men, but a knowledge of those general and particular characters mentioned as applicable to them, and fixed either by nature itself, or by habit and custom, (which is called a second nature) such knowledge would not be so very difficult to be acquired ; what makes it difficult therefore is, that, besides these two characters, almost every man has a third or adventitious character, which is not thus fixed and determined, but may be called accidental and assumed. So far as it is accidental and temporary, it depends upon variable principles and motives, and goes commonly by the names of humour and caprice : and, so far as it is assumed, rather than real, it has respect to qualities, which a man labours not so much to have in reality, as to be thought possest of, and goes commonly by the names of affectation and hypocrisy.

That acquaintance with mankind, which consists in the knowledge of every man's particular humour and caprice, with whom

we have any intercourse, is scarcely possible to be compleatly acquired, nor does it indeed deserve to be much the object, of attention, but rather, of times of amusement, unless so far as it has respect to those whose resolutions and pursuits are particularly interesting, but whose caprices we should beware of admiring or imitating. To say that equanimity or equality of temper is the attainment of none, would be saying too much, for it would discourage our aiming at what contributes unspeakably to our own happiness and that of others ; besides that, it is certain that reason and religion have often done a great deal in the way of rectifying, composing, and establishing the mind, so as to give some steadiness and equality amidst that variety of humour to which we are all more or less subject. A constitutional coolness, indeed, (tho' no virtue) gives great advantage ; but tho' some have naturally more of sedateness and composure than others, or, at least, are not affected by the same objects, yet their emotions are stronger if once they are agitated ; and by other objects, or, in other circumstances, there may be changes of humour to which they are liable. It is the general persuasion we have of this changeableness, in respect of character, or rather humour, which makes much dependence on others to be so generally

generally dreaded ; and indeed a subjection of this kind, is, to a generous mind, of all slaveries the most unsupportable. This persuasion, however, of our common liability to such changes, should be always considered as a reason for mutual forbearance and for humility.

It is scarce possible for one man to differ more from another, in respect of humour, than he sometimes does from himself. The man whom in health you have admired for good humour, becomes often, in sickness, peevish and discontented. The man who by wealth and honour is distinguished, betrays a consciousness of independence and superiority ; but let poverty and ignominy make their approach, his spirits droop, his colours languish. Here, indeed, we cannot help observing, that our ideas of poverty and ignominy are too often falsely associated. This is so much and so often the case, that many would almost rather undergo flames and tortures, than make that confession of their indigence, which the haughtiness of wealth demands, in compensation for its supplies ; and our opinion of ourselves is so much influenced by the opinion which we think others have of us, that the man who, from any eminence of station, falls, like Belisarius, into adverse and depressed circumstances, even without any imputation,

putation upon his integrity or innocence, must have more than ordinary fortitude to avoid a consequent depression of spirit, and seeming diversity of character; we have, however, without going back to the ancient sages, instances enough of these distresses being surmounted, and an equality of temper and character here preserved, as well as amidst the changes from health to bodily sickness and pain, formerly taken notice of. The influence of *Christianity* has often remarkably appeared, by supporting the mind in such cases, and rendering it superior not only to the pleasures but likewise to the pains and calamities of life: There have also been instances even of philosophy's having no small effect in this way, by giving a noble contempt of all outward things; but, that its efficacy was always far short of what some ascribe to it, may be concluded from the refined ridicule of the Roman Satyrists, in the end of that epistle from which we have taken our motto; where, after magnifying the happiness and perfection of a wise man, he humorously concludes with observing, that all this may be marred by a little *Phlegm* in his breast, "*quam Pituita molesta est;*" and indeed, tho' it may be affirmed that true happiness is independent on outward circumstances, yet with respect to exercises of genius, it must be owned, that in order to their being properly animated,

mated, a certain ease and disengagement are necessary, not very consistent either with distress of body, or anxiety of mind.

We might mention many other cases in which men are often seen to differ from themselves, and to depart from their general character, according as their humour is affected by outward circumstances, by their being hurried or at leisure, weary or refreshed, hungry or satisfied, and the like; but we hasten to take some notice of that character which is only *seeming* and not *real*, *i. e.* that which many endeavour to maintain in the opinion of others, rather than labour to acquire the qualities which it consists of. It is a just judgment on the hypocrite, for undervaluing sincerity, that he is led to prosecute his measures in a way more unsuccessful; for his real character cannot long be concealed, by any means he may use to disguise it. What is thus observed with respect to *Hypocrisy*, will likewise hold as to what we call *Affectation*; the former has respect to qualities which we ought to be possessed of, and the latter to such as we may want without detriment; their common aim is to please others, but they would do it by appearances rather than reality; by solicitude to please, they counteract their own purpose; and their *seeming* to possess the good opinion of others, reconciles them to the want of what justly deserves

deserves it. This foolish conceit is by some carried so far, that it nearly affects their pursuit after happiness; that others think them happy seems more their desire, than to study what really contributes to make them so.

From the *Variety* apparent in human characters the same conclusion may be drawn, as from the variety of human pursuits in our last Essay; and that is, that *Vanity* is their common characteristick. He alone is unchangeable who is supreme in perfection, and on him we must depend for permanent Blessedness.

We find it remarked by an inspired Prince, withinimitable propriety, as a distinguishing ingredient of the good man's character, that "He is not afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord;" a firm reliance on the **ALMIGHTY**, is the anchor of the soul, amidst the ebbings and flowings of worldly comforts. When therefore we contemplate the changes to which outward things are liable, let us study a disengagement from their ensnaring influence, by keeping our hearts devoted to him who formed them, and whose various outward addresses to sense are designed to promote the improvement of the heart. Whether he buries the earth in the snows of winter, or revives it again with the opening spring; whether he speaks to the eye in all the

the beautiful and more stupendous prospects of nature, or alarms the ear with the thunder of contending elements, it is to prepare his way into the hearts of men, and lead them to himself for stability of enjoyment.

*Thro' various Channels to address the Soul,
And teach the varying Climes from Pole to Pole.*

That vanity and variety, to which all human schemes are liable, must now put a period to the labours of the REMEMBRANCER; indisposition and other circumstances, not important to the public, make their regular continuance any longer impracticable; but if the renewing them occasionally should happen to be necessary, his admonitions shall be transmitted from another quarter. When *Lycurgus* was departing, after giving laws to the Spartans, he took their oath of obedience to them till his return; a return which he resolved was never to happen; but resolutions and engagements are here inexpedient. If time shall impair the *Memory* of his countrymen, it may possibly be refreshed by the REMEMBRANCER *Redivivus* *.

ESSAY.

* Several subjects of importance that were in view, and could not be overtaken, nor comprised in the *Weekly Essays*, are largely treated of in the *Dissertations* subjoined to them, but never before published.

E S S A Y XV.

A LETTER from LORD B-L-N-G-K-E, to Mess. V-t-e, H-e, and R-ff-au.

Inter.

*Hectora Priamidem; animosum atque inter Achillem,
Ire fuit capitalis, ut ultima divideret mors,
Non aliam ob causam, nisi quod virtus in utroque
Semina fuit.*

HOR.

“ Prince Hector and Achilles bold,
“ Were doughty champions, fam’d of old;
“ A deadly feud their wrath proclaims,
“ For both were valorous in extremes.”

To the R E M E M B R A N C E R.

SIR,

Nov. 1. 1766.

THOUGH it has been always my opinion, that friends should make up their differences, quietly between themselves, and that they seldom gain much by exposing one another to the public, especially when their private correspondence comes to be laid open; yet, when this happens to be done, in such a manner as contributes to the public amusement, I cannot help sharing in it; and, as I reckon myself very much indebted, on this account, to two late disputants*, who have distinguished themselves

* See the late printed account of the dispute between Mess. H-e and R-ff-au, in which it must be owned that the former has behaved most heroically of the two, and deserves to be celebrated accordingly, when the affair comes to be exhibited on the new theatre in the Hay market.

selves in the literary world, I think it would be a piece of ingratitude and injustice to them to suppress the following *letter* *, which their modesty, I suppose, prevents their communicating in the course of their ingenious and edifying correspondence ; but which, coming from a personage of uncommon rank and merit, must do no small honour to those to whom it is wrote ; and, as your being thought to have their confidence, may be a mean of recommending your over-serious lucubrations to their nu-

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L

merous

* This letter was intended for publication at a time when it would have been more *a propos* than at present, an abridgement of it having been sent to the publisher of the London Chronicle, when the public was entertained with the differences between Messrs H—e and R—ſ—u ; but a groundless fear of disobliging the former, who was then usefully and honourably employed in an office of considerable distinction in the state, made the publisher of the paper now mentioned (notwithstanding the boasted liberty of the press) refuse to take it in ; and, though he gave this reason for his refusal, yet, it is highly probable, his fears were groundless ; Mr H—e has always shewn himself to be a man of such good humour and command of temper, that he can bear to be either rallied, or opposed by argument, and knows well how to make reprisals in either way.

From a very general acquaintance with Mr H—e, from the testimony of those who have more the honour of this, and from a particular acquaintance with a great part of his writings, the author of these essays is always ready to acknowledge his great abilities as an historian and politician, as a man of genius and erudition, of humanity and good breeding, but he must always deny him any merit as a *Theologian* or even as a philosopher ; on the contrary, he laments the effects of his scepticism and infidelity, both as to himself and others, and would, most sincerely, rejoice to hear, that, after all his attacks on christianity, he was become a convert to that religion which he has so long opposed, and a trophy of the Redeemer's victory over the powers of darkness and error.

merous admirers in the wester end of the town. My desire of success to your *re-membrancing* scheme, rigid as it is, engages me to put it in your power to pay them a small compliment, by recording what may otherwise run a risk of being lost to the public and to themselves ; for the office of *Recorder* I take to be very nearly connected with yours. And am,

SIR,

Your humble servant,

PLACIDUS.

A LETTER from LORD B-L-N-G-K-E,
to Mess. V--t--e, H--e, and R--f--su.

My Dear Children,

IF the warmth of your present disputes, with one another, will permit you to hearken to the admonitions of a parent, I hope I shall have a favourable hearing from you all ; and, not the less, that being now removed from the society of mortals, I may be supposed to judge the more impartially

tially of any differences that take place among them ; for I am none of those spirits, who are made so pure and perfect, as not to be any more affected by sensible concerns ; I never studied spiritual purity so much, that, even when disembodied, it should be either my aim or my attainment.

But I am not to break through the secrets of my prison house, though I know ye have a curiosity, mixed with some apprehensions with respect to them : It is not to inform you as to *my* state, but to admonish you as to *your own*, that I now take upon me to write to you, and I do it with parental fondness, as one whose authority and affection ye will readily admit ; whatever may be your animosities with respect to one another, I have no doubt of your being all equally devoted to me ; I know that your joint endeavour is to propagate my principles of infidelity and scepticism, by decrying all pretences to revelation, particularly the christian, as being too humbling to reason, too pure and spiritual in its precepts to meet with a favourable reception from any of my family and disciples, who have more spirit than to submit to those doctrines of humility, self-denial, and mortification, which are therein recommended.

Such are your present views and sentiments of things, and such were my own when among you, when I stood foremost in the crowd of free thinkers ; when listening assemblies hung upon my lips ; when the press laboured with my writings, and all the mercenary attendants of the muses trembled at my nod. To these distinctions, ye, my children, have happily succeeded, ye owe them to the taste of the *times* *, so that I paved the way to your obtaining them, and ye even rivalled me in them before I left you : My mantle, like that of a celebrated Israelitish prophet, seems to have fallen upon you ; and, though ye are neither apostles nor prophets, ye have constituted yourselves the *oracles of infidelity*.

Allow

* The present prevalence of infidelity, in different forms, does not so much appear from the number or literary eminence of any late writers against christianity ; nor indeed from any additional weight they have thrown into the scale of argument on the subject since the days of Julian and Celsus, but from the conversation and manners of the half-learned (yet often otherwise entertaining) witslings of our times, when they have any opportunity of displaying their colloquial talents in this way ; nor have sufficient premonitions been wanting, that the little respect here paid to these *matadores* may draw their polemical resentment on these cursory, unelaborate tracts and their author ; but it will fall like the harmless thunder on the stage, as only the subject of a little amusement to one, who, though he would be extremely sorry to fail of that benevolence and good manners, that candour and christian charity *due to them*, yet, while conscious of the rectitude of his own intentions, is equally unsolicitous about their praise or their censure.

Allow me therefore, to congratulate you on the honours ye have acquired in the re-publick of letters, while others commiserate the times to which ye owe them. While ye have the reward of your *merit* make the best of it now, for it is a very different kind of *merit* that would avail you hereafter: But to this distant consideration I am not to suppose that you will condescend to pay any more regard than I did myself; my admonitions shall therefore be suited to what concerns you at present. I shall first address myself to each of you separately, and subjoin such advice as may suit you all in common.

To you then (*my dear Optimist*,*) my first regard is due; the lively fallies of your fancy often captivated mine: What though (upon a comparison with some of your countrymen and cotemporaries) posterity should say that the fancy only is entertained by V--lt--re while the judgment is informed by the immortal *Sully* and the Baron de *Montesquieu*? What signifies it, though your parts should hereafter be thought more specious than solid, your knowledge of more compass than depth? None of these reflections come now to disturb you; the

L 3 brilliancy

* The title of a piece of Voltaire's wrote in the allegorical way, the meaning of which (if it has any meaning at all,) seems to be to ridicule the common notion of providence, that all things are ordered for the best upon the whole.

brilliancy of your spirit and singularity of your conceits gain you sufficient applause at present; amidst great inaccuracies, you have the art of making yourself thought accurate, you can puzzle the understanding which you want to mislead, and find your way to the heart, even when you mean to corrupt it.

Fired with the noble ambition of following my steps, your greatest danger is, that you may overshoot your own mark; strange as it may appear therefore from me, I must advise, that for maintaining the balance of your mind, instead of the *British Free-thinkers*, you would sometimes make the *Geneva Divines* your study, and instead of *Julian* and *Celsus*, put up with *Thomas à Kempis* and *Monf. Fenelon*; what makes such a counterpoise necessary to the ardour of your genius is, that great wit and madness are often found to be nearly allied,—you are justly deemed one of the brightest wits of the regions *above*, but there are many brighter *below*.

To say the same of our *Historians*, may be thought incredible, when comparing their merit with that of Mr *H-me*. My favourite child *H-me*, so much celebrated for your *candour**, think not that I flatter when I

deal

* Raillery apart; there is nothing here said of Mr *H—e*'s candour, scrupulosity, facetiousness, and many other valuable

deal candidly with you; you know I was always far above being suspected in this way, and yet what is no more than doing you justice, might draw such suspicion in the case of any other: Your talents for writing have long been conspicuous, you had my own approbation till I was laid in the dust; then indeed

valuable qualities and endowments, that will not be readily acknowledged by all who know him. What a pity is it, that (through a fondness either for scepticism or singularity) his eminent talents and assiduity as a writer, do not seem to be employed for the benefit of mankind; and without this, I cannot see why a man should be more respectable for his natural abilities than for the height of his stature or the comeliness of his person.

With respect to Messrs. V-t-e and R-ffau, it would likewise be uncandid to deny them the praise due to their sprightly entertaining manner of writing, and perhaps they would have more praise did they appear less sollicitous about it; but we can scarcely denominate them men of *genius* unless the rays of their *genius* were more collected to some particular branch of science, in which they appeared to excel; if they are *luminaries*, it is of the *excentrick* or *eratick* kind, so little confined to any one system, that they are disclaimed by all, and dreaded as detrimental rather than beneficial in their influence; they are, however, intitled to our candour, benevolence and Christian charity; nor will it be easy, upon Christian principles, to justify the severity with which one of them has been treated. Opinions of a dangerous tendency are indeed to be opposed, but when anything like external force and rigour are employed for this purpose, it creates a suspicion of their being too well founded to be suppressed in any other way; if either *reasoning* or *raillery* are employed in supporting them, they are most effectually opposed by the same weapons, with this caution only as to the latter, that when employed about serious matters, we are to beware of using it in such a manner as may make them appear less important and interesting than they really are; but that it may with propriety and success, be sometimes thus employed, appears from Elijah's contest with the priests of Baal, and several other passages of scripture authorizing it.

indeed I ceased to be an infidel, sophistry and scepticism forsook me, but the ' unconquerable will remained, and stedfast opposition to truth' : How could I then fail of admiring your ingenious manner of perplexing it, and these elegant sophisms, by which you study, not to discover truth, but to confirm yourself and others in error : My principles were indeed so acceptable to this age of refinement, that it was much easier for you to conform to its taste, than to correct it ; but lest religion and morality should again come in fashion, an historian of your acuteness was necessary to oppose them ; an historian therefore I pronounce you far superior to *Tacitus**, for *Tacitus* never had so many admirers in *P--d-m——m.*

Your *Essays* may possibly be read but by a few, and, even by these may be little understood ; nothing less therefore than a genius of superior address and sagacity, could have either set you on writing *History*, or enabled you to accomplish it in the manner you have done, for engaging many to be your readers for interesting them in your narrations, and for intermixing your religious

* Mr H——e, as an historian, seems to have formed himself upon *Tacitus*, and to have followed him *passibus aquis*; he cannot therefore be ignorant that even *Tacitus* has given some evidence in favour of christianity, by asserting that sometime before the reign of *Vespasian*, there was through the eastern world a general expectation that one born in *Judea* should be the supreme ruler of mankind : To whom can this be so well applied as to the *MESSIAH* expected by the *Jews* and acknowledged by the *Christians* ?

religious reflections with national transactions, theological errors with historical truths, so as to gain some respect to the one, under cover of the other, and to make some boluses of absurdity go easily down, by the deliciousness of the vehicle in which they are conveyed.

By such heterogenous mixtures as these, have you brought some simple young men to believe that adultery is a smaller crime than drunkenness, that miracles are incredible, that all religion is either fanaticism or superstition, and the like precious doctrines; revelation you have exploded, christianity you have almost anathematized, and the once celebrated martyrs and reformers you have brought to the level of common men; but, as for these petty critics who presume to bark at you, " why ! you bestride them like a Colossus, they walk under your huge legs, and peep about to find themselves dishonourable graves." Taking all this therefore into the account, and, along with it, the profundity of your genius, the elevation of your views, and the facetiousness of your conversation, no wonder that civilians and statesmen should be your converts, that public negociations should be committed to you, and public emoluments bestowed; when like to be persecuted in one country, you fly to preferment in another,

ther, and leaving poor R—f—au to be the martyr, you are become the illustrious champion of infidelity*.

My

* The foundation of Mr Hume's sceptical system of philosophy is; that, laying aside the intuitive suggestions of common sense as no sufficient mean of proof, and admitting only such proof as arises from abstract reasoning or theory; we have no evidence of the existence either of matter or spirit as the substratum of the qualities, effects, or operations commonly ascribed to them; so that, (according to him,) all that any man knows or should believe, is, that there are certain *impressions* made on him, that these are followed or attended by certain *sensations*, *perceptions*, or *ideas*, and that the present impression made by any object, as heat, cold, &c. or the idea of it when felt or perceived, differs from the idea of it when remembered, believed, imagined, or reflected on, only in respect of being more or less lively; but the real existence of any object making such an impression, or of any permanent being perceiving it, he doubts, as a thing that cannot be demonstrated.

He doubts then (you'll say) of his own existence! Yes, sure: He acknowledges this doubt of his being any more than a collection of ideas or perceptions succeeding one another, and does not admit the existence of any percipient being they belong to: Nay, the *universe* itself (he doubts) is but a heap of perceptions or effects, but without evidence of there being any by whom it is perceived, or by whom it was produced; for, arguing from our common ideas of power and its effects, or from effects to causes, he rejects, as having no connection in reason, whatever they have in experience, or according to the common sense and apprehensions of mankind; or, granting particular effects to be commonly admitted as proofs of the existence of their causes, the *universe* (though a collection of all these effects,) is, says he, something so singular and unparalleled that it cannot be argued about in the same way.

Nor is it only material and immaterial existences, but likewise moral existence which Mr Hume doubts of, admitting nothing in moral qualities or virtues, such as justice, temperance, &c. either in respect of the volition or approbation attending them, that can distinguish them, or put them on a different footing from the natural qualities or endowments of strength, sagacity, beauty, &c.

Im

My beloved unfortunate *R--ff--au*, how can I thus mention you without a tear? could such a tribute be expected from *H--d--s*, to whom can it be more justly due? In the cause of infidelity, you have fought most unskilfully, without money, without friends, without cunning to protect you,

In a word, let Mr *Hume*'s doctrines have their full effect, and there is an end of all religion and morality; but providence has in all ages interposed for preventing this, and it is to be particularly remarked in the present case, that the university of *Aberdeen* has had the honour of being distinguished in defending the cause of truth and virtue from the attacks of their sceptical opponents, and whoever would wish to have a full view of the sophistry of Mr *Hume*'s reasonings in particular, may consult the writings of doctors *Gerard*, *Campbell*, and *Reid*, all of them once members of that university: But I have lately had the pleasure of perusing a new treatise, intituled, "An Essay on the nature and immutability of Truth;" which appears to me to give the sceptical system the most fatal blow it ever received; and, as I find from the title page, that Mr *Beattie*, the ingenious author of this *Essay*, belongs also to the university of *Aberdeen*, I would now beg leave to suggest, that, instead of any further disputation, a tomb-stone may be laid for Mr *Hume* in one of the college halls of *Aberdeen*, with the following short inscription: "Here lies that huge bundle of ideas, or successive unperceived perceptions, once known by the name of David *Hume*, Esq." But let me add, that, though the interment of the *ideal* David *Hume*, is now, without all doubt, so near, yet, it is hoped, and earnestly wished, that some *reality* of him may remain, till the happy event mentioned in the end of our annotation, p. 121, take place with respect to him; nor am I without hopes that this may, sooner or later, be the case; nay, so much do his genius and character, in some respects, please me, that I do most earnestly wish for it, as what would have many desirable consequences, both with respect to himself and others; and, with a view to it, I beg leave (if these sheets happen to come in his way,) to recommend to him a careful review of the 9th chap. of the *Acts of the Apostles*, with *Lord Lyttleton*'s judicious observations on it.

you, hence you are driven, like Cain, from the place of your nativity, as a fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth ; like him too, you have your fears, nor do they seem to be groundless, that every man who finds you would be your destroyer : How much better had you been in your own state of nature, eating apples and acorns with the savage of the woods ? Your incomparable *Emilius* * would not then have disturbed you

* A Treatise of Mons. R--fl--u's on Education, in which (as in all his works) there are some things very ingenious, but not enough to make up for their dangerous tendency with respect to religion : This occasioned his being obliged to leave France for fear of a prosecution. And now that (to use a comparison of his own) he has, like an old worn out maffiff, been chased from one kingdom to another, and at length thrown himself on the protection of the English. It would be ungenerous to deny him this, even tho' the oddity of his behaviour to Mr H--me, may, by some, be thought to render him unworthy of the public notice, for it only shews, that J. J. R--fl--au is still J. J. R--fl--au, whether he is in Switzerland, in France, or in England, nay it must be owned, that, in respect of his epistolary talents, he likewise appears to be the same, and that in his letters to Mr H--me, even since their breach, there appears, amidst all his absurdities, a certain openness of temper and intrepidity (I may say) of spirit, in his imaginary distress, which cannot but strike any person of sentiment who reads them. He now gives up (he says) all his reputation for life, and (we may likewise add,) all his views of wordly interest to Mr H--me, and, tho' the sacrifice is not very great, as no wise men would much envy him for any share he ever had of either, yet one cannot help observing, that, if he was a proper object of royal munificence formerly, he is no less so now, tho' so extravagant as to refuse it through the mediation of Mr H--me, whose conduct towards him was truly noble and disinterested, till they came to an open rupture, but who has therupon gone rather too far in the way of exposing

you, nor the good citizens of Geneva been alarmed by your zeal, in England or France, you had not been heard of, nor fled for protection to your fellow labourer H--me; asleep or awake his words had not pierced you, nor his looks * struck such terror,

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M

when

one so remarkably friendless and forlorn, and whose ignorance of our language disables him to defend himself. The charge of his making a shew of poverty and distress, which were not real, is so ignominious, and so inconsistent with other parts of his character, that it should either have been suppressed or supported, by some better authority than bare assertion. The probability is, that, on Mr H--me's withdrawing the additional board paid on his account at Wotton, unknown to himself, he shall be left in more destitute circumstances than ever; and such as, if properly represented by some other mediator, would procure him at least one half of the pension formerly offered him; the other half (which he well deserves to forfeit for his capriciousness) would be well bestowed on the widow of a very useful and unexceptionable writer [Doctor Leland] whose view of the Deistical writers is well known to the public, and whose widow has, for the support of herself and family, opened a subscription at Dublin for publishing some posthumous works of her husband lately deceased. This is humbly suggested by one, who (tho' he feels for the distresses of others, be their principles or opinions what they will,) has as little of family connection with Mr Leland, as with Mr R--ff--au; but who, thinks that the former has done more in defence of Christianity, than the later was able to do in opposition to it, and that Leland in some of his *Things*, as the learned Bishop of Gloucester diminutively calls them, has, with remarkable modesty, and no unnecessary ostentation of learning, done as much service to religion as his Lordship, by his edition of Shakespear, his elaborate Legation, &c. and his controversial correspondence with the amiable Bishop of Oxford.

* This, it is supposed, refers to some words and looks of wonderful significance, mentioned in the printed account formerly quoted, from which it likewise appears, that a pension generously procured by Mr H--me, for Mons. R--ff--au, was

when encountering your's, neither Princes nor ministers could persecute you with *Penfions*; some cavern would afford you a safe retreat even without a *governante*, your faithful *cat* would defend you from rivals and criticks of the ravenous tribes.

But let me not add to your distress, by reciting further what you failed of attaining: It may give you more comfort to consider what I myself forfeited and felt, and to which you cannot be supposed entirely a stranger; let therefore the thoughts of my sufferings reconcile you to your own. What I have wrote upon exile, suits our common experience; but my spirit was invincible by faction or fate. I displayed the merit of a *patriot King*, when my loyalty was suspected, and the desire of my heart denied me. My religion no Monarch on earth could deprive me of; it was always unknown, both to others and myself; my freedom and property were likewise continued, but I no longer shone as a minister of state; from philosophy or divinity, I disdained to take comfort, but yielded to passion the remainder of my life.

Such

was, with more generosity than gratitude or discretion, rejected by the latter. As for the two animals, here next taken notice of, they are said to have been hitherto the inseparable companions of this philosopher, and worthy of being henceforth reckoned among the sprightly inhabitants of *Parnassus*.

Such then, (my dear R--ff--au) have been my political progress and sufferings. You are the first to whom I ever deigned to complain, and I do it with a view to mitigate your distresses, by recounting my own. But after addressing you, and my other two favourite pupils separately, allow me only to add a few short admonitions, suited to you all in common.

First then, let me, from my own experience, advise you to beware of any open breach or dissensions among yourselves ; however high your emulation is to surpass one another in zeal for the success of my doctrine, yet beware of discovering your secret feuds and animosities, so as to hurt the common cause. Ye all know, how much my character and dignity were endangered, by endeavouring to bring disgrace on the memory of my friend Mr P--pe. Nothing but the merit of my posthumous works, could have prevented your endeavouring to bring the like disgrace upon me, as soon as my final departure from you disabled me to stand up in my own defence : Your indiscretion at present, is indeed beyond mine ; ye attack one another ; even before any of you is laid in silence, and unable to make reply, your contests must therefore expose you the more, by recriminating on one another ; and your abandoning the unhappy

R-ff-au, may draw ridicule on your triumvirate.

My next advice to you is briefly this : Conscious that theology is, by no means, your talent ; knowing also how little your cause will bear the scrutiny of the judicious, and how few these are, when compared to the unintelligent undiscerning multitude, beware of close fighting ; beware of any serious argumentation ; address yourselves, as much as possible, to the passions and prevailing corruptions of the age : Practise on the young and inexperienced, the sensual and profane. Ecclesiasticks of all denominations ye are to consider as your professed enemies ; admit of no distinctions among them, nor any supposition of their being actuated by devotion, but by worldly interest : If any of them have been distinguished for bigotry, ignorance or indiscretion, represent them all as such : Ye are rather to put a negative on all religions, than to make any positive declaration of your own ; where popery is professed, speak as favourably of protestantism as the court of inquisition will permit you ; but if you happen to be among protestants, let the beauty of the Catholick church be your theme. Refine upon all religions, but beware of admitting that the true one is any more than an ideal or imaginary phantom, incompatible

incompatible in any form, with the condition of mortals *.

Last of all, let me advise you, now that your doctrine is so fast gaining ground, and the number of your converts increased, to

* The tendency of *true or vital Religion* (considered as distinct from the outward modes of worship, and from formality and superstition on the one hand, as much as from fanaticism and bigotry on the other) is to advance the perfection of human nature into a greater conformity to the Divine will, by maintaining an habitual regard to it, in heart and life, according to the various discoveries made of it to us both by reason and revelation: Though therefore it should, in this imperfect state, fail of having its full effect in the way of improvement or comfort, and, though their number may be few (comparatively speaking) on whom it has even a partial effect; yet, if it has so with any, or in any degree, it would be as unfair to conclude, that all religion is vain and imaginary, because it makes no man perfect, as it would be to conclude, that the whole physical art is vain, because no man is made thereby perfectly healthy and immortal; but we have much more to say for the *Religion of Jesus*, in so much as he has brought life and immortality to light, for animating the hopes, and invigorating the endeavours of all his upright and faithful followers, for that, even in the most degenerate ages of christianity, there have always been some such, will be doubted by none, except such as profess with Montagne and Mandeville, that they are well versed in the defects of mankind, but know nothing of their excellencies or attainments: These deprecate human nature, not from a principle of self-denial, as some humble sincere christians do, upon a just view of its universal depravity, but that, by abolishing virtue, they may likewise abolish vice, and admit of no distinction between them, nor any reality in either, but what arises from a regard to external motives and human institutions:

" Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,

" That vice or virtue there is none at all;

" If black and white blend, soften and unite

"A thousand ways, is there no black or white?"

POPE.

beware of changing fides *; you and I know that the love of singularity is one of our darling passions ; we owe our distinction to its progenitors, for it is the offspring of *folly*

* Besides the dangerous consequences already mentioned of the *sceptical system* to religion and morality, by weakening our regard to the testimony of reason, common sense and moral feelings ; besides this (I say) it were easy to prove that the transition is very natural from this system to *credulity, superstition, and enthusiasm* : For, What are the capital doctrines of this system ? Why, 1. That, by the uncertainty of reason and fallacy of sense, all knowledge is resolved into impressions of simple *belief*, or rather *imagination*, and no grounds left for this, as to things *past* and *present*, but human testimony, which would thus become so necessary, and indeed so desirable, that the regard to it must rise to *credulity*, and dispose for embracing opinions, the most contrary to reason and sense; transubstantiation itself not excepted.

2. If it should be said that (especially as to what is future) another ground of belief is admitted, and chiefly relied on, in the above system, viz. past *experience* or *observation* of the *connection* of ideas, in the way of resemblance, contiguity or causation ; yet this connection or relation is left on so loose a footing, in respect of any permanent *faculty* in us perceiving it, or any reality in the *objects* thus seeming to be connected, that we would, upon these principles, be naturally led, either to with-hold our belief of such a connection entirely, or (as all cases are by this scheme put upon a level) *superstitiously* to believe in such a connection (without any appeal to our reason or senses) wherever any of the connecting principles mentioned seem to take place : If famine or pestilence sometimes happen after the appearance of comets, rain after the new moon, or the loss of a battle after the appearance of a crow, we would be led to believe them connected : Is not this superstition ?

3. All existence being questioned by the *sceptical system*, except that of *impressions* and consequent *ideas*, a question must arise, Whence are these impressions, if there are no outward permanent objects corresponding with and exciting them ? From some invisible supernatural Being, perhaps, does the sceptic sometimes say, and, though this, in some cases, be found divinity, yet what is it, when extended to all cases, but the most extravagant species of *enthusiasm* ?

folly begot upon *pride* ; if, therefore, your opinions become general, ye can no more be singular, and my posthumous doctrine may give you disgust ; should this ever happen, should such a shameful apostacy take place, be assured, that all your past services shall be forgot, your praises and emoluments from the publick shall be withdrawn, the spirits b-n—h will commence hostilities against you, and none more avowedly than

Your present *admirer, guardian,*
and *counsellor,*

B-L-NG—KE.

D I S S E R.

DISSERTATION I.

On CONSCIENCE.

NO SUBJECTS are more nearly allied to one another than *religion* and *morality*, and yet a sincere lover of both cannot help observing with regret, that, in some excellent treatises upon the latter, a kind of distinction seems to be kept up, which extends to the very terms that are made use of, and that have respect to the one as much as to the other. It is possible I may myself be, in some measure, chargeable with the same fault in the expressions used for illustrating some moral subjects; and the most favourable account I can give of it, is, to ascribe it either to inadvertence, or to our being so much accustomed to read the writings of the ancient moralists, who, unassisted by the christian revelation, and the discoveries therein made of the nature and will of God, were at a loss in determining as to the foundation of morality and the ultimate end of man, and made use of terms or expressions suited to their, imperfect views; but who, if they had had the same advantage of revelation, that christian writers have, would probably have submitted to its evidence, and adopted the terms therein used;

used ; and remarkably applicable to both the subjects above mentioned, *Religion* and *Morality*.

What is here observed might be exemplified in the use of the words, *grace*, *faith*, *purity*, *charity*, and the like, so industriously avoided by some modern writers on morality, though used with such inimitable propriety in our sacred oracles. But what leads me particularly to make this remark at present, is its applicableness to the subject proposed for this dissertation, which is **CONSCIENCE**, a subject of the greatest importance in religion and morals, but whose nature and bounds have, perhaps, been as little attended to as any ; nay, and the word itself, however frequent in scripture, and expressive of our common feelings, is almost banished the writings of some later moralists.

In one of our last essays, we referred our readers to this faithful *Remembrancer*, which is inseparably connected with us, and intended giving some account of its nature and office : We would now therefore wish to treat of the subject at some length, and with some accuracy, both in a philosophical and practical light. In order to which, we shall, after premising some account and definition of it, proceed to consider the most material questions that arise with respect to it.

For

For informing ourselves with respect to the nature and office of Conscience, it is not the accounts and descriptions of others, nor any thing without us, that we should have recourse to, but what passes within ourselves; for, whatever disputes may arise with respect to it, this is universally agreed, that it is some power or principle every one of us is possessed of, and which therefore every one of us must, by proper attention, be qualified to judge of. God has not left himself without a witness in any of our breasts.

Let us therefore consider the state of our own minds, when either deliberating upon some important action, which we are about to do, or reflecting on it after it is done, do we not find something within us, necessarily determining us, sometimes to approve, and sometimes to condemn ourselves; to reckon one action good and another evil? This principle or faculty therefore in our minds, which determines our judgment of the morality of our own actions, is what we call *Conscience*; the same that moved Joseph's brethren to accuse one another for the supposed murder of their brother; and Judas Iscariot to hasten his own death, for having been an instrument in effecting that of his innocent Lord and Master; the same that smote King David, when

when awakened at different times by the Prophet's reproof, and made Felix tremble at the Apostle's reasonings on righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.

In passing these and the like judgments * on their actions, men are necessarily determined, and could not think otherwise though they inclined it, or reckoned it their interest: Can any man bring himself not to approve a just, a generous, or grateful action, or can he help disapproving the contrary? Even the condemned criminal must approve the justice of the sentence pronounced against himself.

Thus then we come to have an idea of *Conscience*, from its effects or operations, in determining us to approve or condemn our actions; nor is it indeed possible for us, in this state of ignorance and imperfection, to form our notions of this, or any of the powers of our mind, from a view of their nature and essential constitution, but from their effects and operations.

Agreeably to this account of *Conscience*, it may be thus briefly defined: A reflex principle within us necessarily or involuntarily

* It will easily be seen (as we shall have occasion to shew more fully afterwards) that this *necessity* has not respect to the actions themselves, which are *free*, but to our approbation of them.—On a supposition of *freedom* in *acting*, *approbation* and *accountableness* are founded.

tarily determining us to approve of some of our actions and affections as good, and disapprove of the contrary as evil, in a moral and religious sense, as we shall afterwards see; in which view, the questions that naturally arise with respect to it are as follows:

I. What *relation* it bears to the *other powers* of the mind?

II. What *qualities* in actions and affections determine it to approve or disapprove of them?

III. What *ends* or purposes it answers in the human constitution?

IV. How far its *province* or office properly extends, and about what objects it is exercised?

V. Wherein the regard due to it consists, and how far its judgment *justifies*?

VI. How we may know when it is properly exercised, and this regard paid to it?

A particular enumeration and solution of the various cases of Conscience that occur, or the practical questions that may arise with respect to it, in different conditions

ons and circumstances, is not here proposed; this would be a fitter subject for a system or volume than for a short essay; and, to be fully acquainted with it, we must refer to the various writers on casuistic divinity and morality; but a proper solution of the general questions above mentioned, may possibly enable each of us to be his own casuist in most cases that occur in common life; which is indeed necessary in order to a proper discharge of the offices of it. We begin therefore with considering.

I. What relation Conscience bears to the other powers of the mind, how far it is connected with or distinct from them, and to which of them it seems to be most nearly allied?

In order to our understanding this, it will be necessary to explain the nature of *consciousness* of *reflection* and *intelligence* in general.

By the general word *consciousness*, seems to be meant the action of the mind when reflecting on its own ideas or operations: It is too simple an act, to admit of a just definition, and seems to be a kind of mental feeling or sensation *

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* Hence we often use the words *conscious* and *sensible* promiscuously, as when we say, I am *sensible* that I am awake, I move, write, &c. but when we apply the word *sensible* to the operations of the mind, as when we say, I am *sensible* that I think, reason, &c. it seems entirely metaphorical; as also, when we use it for being persuaded, convinced, as, that I am *sensible* it is true.

of the impressions made on us by any objects, either from without, or from within, without which those objects and impressions are not taken notice of by the mind, so as to raise any ideas in it: Thus, for instance, upon making any noise near us, there must be an impression made on the sensory, whether we attend to it or not, but, till it is attended to in a reflex way, we are not *conscious* of our hearing it; no idea can be said to be consequent on this impression.

The words *perception*, *intelligence*, *reflection*, *consciousness*, would seem to express something different from one another; and yet are often promiscuously used. *Perception* is ascribed to all sensible or animal beings, from the lowest to the highest, and is properly the receiving of ideas, in consequence of impressions made on them in the way of sensation. *Intelligence* supposes more than a mere principle of life, perception and sensation; it supposes not only a capacity of receiving ideas, in consequence of such sensible impressions, but likewise a power of reflecting on these ideas, and operating upon them.

Or, in other words, as the objects that make an impression on the mind, or raise ideas in it, may be either *external* to it, and what we call sensible, or *internal*, *viz.* its own operations about the ideas it has from the

the former, becoming another set of objects, by *reflection*, and raising another set of ideas; making this distinction, I say, of *external* and *internal* objects, *perception* seems to express more particularly, the receiving of ideas from the first of these from *external* objects by *sensation*; *intelligence*, only the receiving ideas from the *internal* by *reflection*; hence we ascribe the former to all animal beings, but confine the latter to the superior classes of them, as not reckoning the inferior capable of *reflection**.

The same restriction we make of the object and subject of *consciousness*; it is an idea got from *reflection* upon the relation which the mind's perceptions and operations bear to itself, implying, as it were, property in them. Thus, then, *external* objects are never the objects of *consciousness*; but the ideas received from them, and the operations of the mind about these ideas, becoming, as it were, *internal* objects; we never say, we are conscious of a sound, but of hearing a sound. And when these objects of *consciousness*, (either of a religious or moral nature) come to be approved or disapproved of by

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the

* It may however be questioned, whether *reflection* may not, in some degree, be ascribed to some of the inferior tribes of animals, or if only to man? But, this is a question more curious than useful, and does not concern our present enquiry.

the mind, we ascribe this approbation or disapprobation to a peculiar principle in it, which we call *Conscience*.

We now proceed therefore, to consider how far this principle falls in with some other powers of the mind, as *reason*, and a *moral sense*, or is distinct from them.

As to the first, it must be owned, that, taking *reason* in the most extensive sense, for the power of discovering truth and good, of approving them, and distinguishing them from the contrary; in this extensive sense, I say, it might be said to comprehend the office of *conscience*; as it would be difficult to find any difference between the testimony of *reason*, concerning our own moral actions, in approving or condemning them after examination, and the operations of *Conscience*; but if the province of *reason* be limited, (as in strict propriety of speech it should be,) by confining it to the discernment or discovery of the nature and tendency of actions, any consequent judgment with respect to them, in the way of approbation or disapprobation, may be considered as the province of *Conscience*; or, if *reason* may be said to judge of actions, it's judgment is slower, and more deliberate; that of *Conscience* more immediate, involuntary and necessary, accompanied with some reflection indeed, but in a less degree than the other.

The

The most manifest difference, however, between them lies in this, that the judgment of *reason*, extends to the actions of *others*, as well as to our own ; that of *Conscience* is confined to *our own* actions, to such as we are *conscious* of; nor does the province of *reason*, with respect to our own actions, seem to be the judging of their *goodness* so much as of their *truth*, of their true and real tendency to some end, or conformity to some rule or law ; in consequence of which discoveries with respect to them, *Conscience* passes judgment on them as good, evil, or indifferent ; which suggests to us another difference betwixt them lying in this, that *reason* cannot be said to judge of *ultimate ends*, but only of *means* and *subordinate ends*, and these means only whose tendency to the ultimate end it discovers and reflects on ; but *Conscience* approves of ultimate ends, and even of means, whose tendency to these we do not see, or at least do not consider.

Thus, making the good of the whole an ultimate end, we cannot perhaps be said to approve of it from *reason*, as we cannot, if it be really an ultimate end, give any *reason* * for this our approbation ; it may

N 3 therefore

* If the reason be resolved into the will of God, private good or interest, original fitness, right, or the like, still the question

therefore be ascribed to *Conscience*, as a distinct principle from *reason*. In the same way, when we approve of any of our own actions as virtuous or morally good, it must be either on account of some absolute ultimate goodness conceived to be in them, our approbation of which (as in the former case) we can give no reason for; or it must be on account of their tendency to some ultimate end, as the good of the whole, private good, or conformity to the will of God; but in cases where we do not perceive or consider this tendency, * can it be *reason* that leads us to approve of them, or may it not more properly be a different principle, as *Conscience*, anticipating, as it were, this end, without reasoning about it, and whose operations may be said to be rather *sentimental* than *intellectual*?

Any distinction, therefore, we can make, betwixt the testimony of reason and that of conscience must lie in this, that reason examines and discerns, conscience approves: Reason is slower and more deliberate in its operations than conscience; tho' both have some

question will recur, For what reason is any of these approved? And where none can be assigned, the approbation of it cannot be ascribed to *reason*, but, (as is here said) to *Conscience*.

* This perhaps is the case, with some in many of their actions, or expressions of affection, as those of gratitude, humanity, and whatever reflection and deliberation do not take place.

some degree of reflection accompanying them : Reason judges of all actions ; conscience only of our own, or such as we are conscious of : Reason judges properly of their truth, conscience of their goodness ; and, in fine, reason judges of means, and those only whose tendency to the ultimate end is discovered ; conscience of ultimate ends themselves, and even of means, whose tendency to them is only presumed, in the way of anticipation, tho' not distinctly traced.

The other faculty of the mind, whose operations it will be most difficult to distinguish from those of *Conscience*, is what we call a *moral sense*, or power of receiving the ideas of moral good and evil from actions, approving of the one as grateful, and disapproving of the other as ungrateful to it. One difference seems undeniable betwixt them from the extent of their object ; that of a moral sense, being (as was before said of reason) all moral actions of *ourselves or others* ; that of conscience, *our own only* : There may perhaps be another distinction betwixt them worth notice, from our reckoning the exercise of *Conscience*, (tho' not so deliberate as that of *reason*) to have more of *deliberation* and *reflection* accompanying it, than that of a *moral sense*.

It may indeed be questioned, whether we can ascribe so much reflection to this or any

any sense, as to say that it approves or disapproves of any thing; simple perception being the office of a sense, but approbation or disapprobation in consequence of it, being properly that of a distinct reflex power of the mind, as *conscience*.

II. The next question that occurs with respect to *Conscience*, is, what qualities in actions and affections determine it to approve or disapprove of them? for approbation and disapprobation must, like all other simple ideas, have certain correspondent qualities in their objects, by which they are raised.

As this is one of the most disputed subjects in morals, an enquiry into it may possibly carry us farther than would at first be expected in speaking of conscience, but cannot, in some measure, be here avoided.

We shall therefore begin our enquiry by mentioning the different accounts given of these moral qualities, and observing in general wherein they are placed, and wherein the various accounts of them agree or differ from one another; they are generally placed, therefore, either

1. In an agreeableness to nature, *i. e.* to certain natural fitnesses in things themselves, or, (which is the same,) to the truth of things

things; that is, to the true and real fitnesses and relations of things.

2. In a tendency either to public or private good.

3. In an agreeableness to the will or law of a superior.

4. In an agreeableness to reason.

5. In an agreeableness to a moral sense, or mental faculty of perceiving moral good and evil. Or

6. In an agreeableness to conscience.

Of these different accounts we may observe, that all of them seem to make the *qualities* of moral good and evil something relative, or that they suppose them to have a reference to a mind, either perceiving or appointing them, rather than any positive existence of their own.

The first hypothesis indeed, by deducing them from the natural *fitnesses* of things, seems to give them such an existence, but must fall in with the rest, if it is asked, What end this fitness respects, and why we approve of this end itself, or of actions whose tendency to it is either not manifest or not attended

attended to and reflected on? If it is an ultimate end, it can be on account of no fitness for any thing beyond itself that we approve of it, so that fitness, which always implies such a reference beyond the object itself, is incompatible with an ultimate end.

The second opinion does not account for our approbation of the ends mentioned, *public* or *private good*.

To the third opinion, by which all is referred to the *will* of a *superior*, some object that it must fall in with one of the three last mentioned, before it can account for such a superior's approbation of these qualities; must there not, it is said, be something in his nature, determining him to approve of moral good and disapprove of its contrary? or are these two in themselves equally indifferent to him, and are they, antecedent to his appointment, equally indifferent to inferior agents, so that he might have constituted them in such a manner as to have approved of moral qualities in a manner directly contrary to what they now do, or to have reckoned that to be morally good which they now judge to be evil? and, if this be not the case, is not his own judgment of these qualities limited and regulated, though not by any thing external to himself, yet, at least, by some principle or quality in his own nature corresponding.

sponding with that by which we are determined to approve or disapprove of actions as morally good or evil.

To account therefore for these qualities of moral good and evil which excite our approbation or disapprobation, we must (it is said,) have recourse to one of the other three opinions, to some faculty in our own minds, either *reason*, *moral sense*, or *conscience*, in an agreeableness to which their essence must be placed; and, if this be agreed on, the difference will perhaps be found to be more about the name given this faculty and its different operations, than about the nature and office of the faculty itself; or, if a nice distinction is to be made, in the manner set forth under the former question, the province of reason is the examination of actions as to their nature and tendency, that of a moral sense the perception of their consequent moral qualities, it being much a-kin to our perception of sensible qualities, as being immediate and independent on the will; but our approving or disapproving of actions after such an examination and perception of their moral qualities, that is, our passing judgment on them in consequence of this, or giving an active positive testimony with respect to their moral good or evil, belongs to another faculty than either of these two last mentioned; in what

what regards the actions of others, indeed, our perception and judgment of their moral qualities, may be accounted for from the general testimony of reason and a moral sense now mentioned; but, as what most nearly interests us is, our judgment of the morality of our own actions, or, at least, of those which we bring home particularly to our own case and experience; this may be considered as the peculiar province of that principle or faculty within us which we call *conscience*.

After all, I must own that there is something, at least in the manner in which moral writers express themselves on this subject, which does not satisfy me; and yet, I doubt much if I can deliver my own sentiments with respect to it, in such a way as will not be liable to some exceptions, arising from our ignorance of moral as well as of natural *essences* or establishments. In natural objects we distinguish between their *primary* and *secondary* qualities, (as Mr Lock denominates them,) that is, between those that have a positive existence independent of any mind perceiving them, or which are inherent in, and essential to the subject they belong to, such as solidity, extension, figure, &c. called primary qualities, and these which are not thus essential, but secondary and accidental, having respect to our perception of them, without any

any positive existence of their own, (except what arises from the primary qualities mentioned,) as colours, sounds, smells, &c. The last of these, *viz.* secondary qualities, are acknowledged to be variable and separable from the subject of them; the first are not, though some indeed have gone so far as to deny, or at least, doubt of the existence of these likewise; but, taking this for granted, (as indeed it may, from the intuitive testimony of common sense, without reasoning upon it,) if, by analogy, we carry the same distinction to the *moral qualities* of objects, it will be difficult to reconcile us to any hypothesis, by which they are put on the same footing with the *secondary qualities* now mentioned, so as that moral good and evil might have been otherwise constituted, had its being so been agreeable to the mind appointing or perceiving it: We can scarcely allow these important moral qualities to have any dependence upon either the will of a superior, or the constitution* and faculties of the actor or observer; the idea we have

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* If the morality of actions, however, had not some respect to the constitution and faculties of the being who acts, then the actions even of brutes might be said to be morally good or evil; yet, the same actions which are so called when performed by men, it would be absurd thus to denominate when performed by brutes, however important their consequences may be, which shews that these moral qualities suppose the agent to be moral or rational.

of imperfection in whatever refers to and depends upon one or both of these among men, together with our ignorance (as was said) of moral as well as natural essences, is what probably occasions this difficulty ; and yet, without some reference to one or both of these, (only raising our ideas higher than to what has any dependence on men,) it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to account for those moral qualities, and speak intelligibly with respect to them. If therefore I may be here allowed to express myself in the way that appears to me least liable to exception, or at least, most consistent with the order of my own ideas ; it is as follows :

The goodness of actions either in a moral or religious view, may (to use a word more descriptive of their qualities,) be said to consist in their *rectitude*. Rectitude, in general, has respect to some *rule* or law, in a conformity to which it consists, and it also respects an *end* to which this rule directs; for, when any action or object is said to be *right*, even in a *natural* as well as a *moral* or *religious* sense, the meaning is, that it is agreeable to some particular *rule* or *law*, which is the measure of its goodness and perfection, and that it leads to some particular *end*, for which it is conceived to be good and fit, or *perfect* : This therefore seems

to be the notion of rectitude, goodness, or fitness, in the general: But, more particularly, that which has respect to *moral agents*, consists in a conformity to the *law* of their creation, and end for which they were created, constituted, and endowed, in the manner they are.

As therefore, the *will* of the SUPREME BEING, made known, both by reason and revelation, is the great rule or law with respect to men, and his glory, (not in the limited sense in which the word is often used, but as connected with the general good) together with the participation of his happiness and perfection, (according to their order and sphere in nature, or the capacities given them,) the great end of their being; all goodness or rectitude, with respect to men, in a moral and religious sense, implies ~~confusion~~ a conformity to the divine ~~will~~ or *law*, directing them to such measures of conduct as promote the great *end* of their being now mentioned, the unity of which may be always asserted, though consisting of the two parts we took notice of, (according as it has respect to God or to man,) because of the inseparability of these two parts from one another.

This conformity to the will of the Supreme Being, in which all religious and moral rectitude consists, has respect to the

temper and affections of the agent, as well as to his actions or the outward expressions of them ; and, so far as human laws have this conformity, either meditately or immediately, they become proper rules of duty; but, without this, they may have a political or arbitrary, but no moral or religious obligation. On this question I shall only add a few words more, for obviating what may possibly be objected to this account of these qualities in actions and affections, which determine us to approve or disapprove of them.

I. It may, perhaps, be said, that, if their essence consists in conformity to the will of the supreme Being, and, if nothing happens but by his will or appointment, either all distinction is taken away between moral good and evil, or the existence of the latter entirely denied : But this is confounding the question with another, respecting the introduction or permission of moral evil, and the manner of reconciling it to the divine government and superintendency : That good and evil are as essentially different as light and darkness, or any two of the most opposite qualities in nature, is undeniably ; we may as well deny our own existence, or the existence of any thing in the manner that is most agreeable to the natural order of our

our ideas; but in what manner the divine superintendency extends to the appointment or permission of moral evil, is one of the mysteries in providence, which we can no more account for than we can account for the *manner* of the existence of any thing in nature, further than that the introduction of moral evil, may, very warrantably, be ascribed to man's *abuse* of the *free powers* of action given him; and the giving him these powers resolved into the depth of the divine wisdom and sovereignty, of which no account can be given more satisfying than that of an inspired writer, Rom. ix.

19,-21.*

2. To our manner of accounting for the moral qualities in question, by resolving all moral goodness or rectitude into a conformity to the divine will, it may be further objected, that this is putting them upon a mutable or precarious footing, denying them a positive existence, and giving room to suppose that the supreme Being might, by an act of his will or authority, have reversed or altered these moral qualities, as easily as he might have altered these secondary or sensible qualities of matter formerly spoken of, colours, sounds, &c. by constituting us so as to make the report of our senses with-

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respect

* See this more fully treated of in the third Dissertation.

respect to them, quite contrary to what it now is.

To this it may be answered, that these secondary qualities of matter have their dependence on the divine will and appointment, in a manner quite different from the moral qualities mentioned, the former are as it were accidental to the material subjects to which they are ascribed, and not inherent but separable from them; the latter are essential to those moral actions or subjects they belong to, inherent in them, and as inseparable from them as perfection is from the Almighty; he may as soon cease to be, as cease to be good, just, and holy; the perfections of his will, or his moral perfections, are as inseparable from him, and as unalterable, as those of his understanding if (according to our limited views,) we may be thus allowed to express ourselves on a subject, to which our most enlarged conceptions and expressions are so inadequate; the moral qualities therefore in question, or whatever may be considered as the emanation, result, or effect of these perfections, are imminutile as the divine nature, and, in the same circumstances and relations of the moral action or agent to whom they are applied, will, upon a proper examination and perception of them, continue to excite the same ideas of approbation.

or

or disapprobation in every intelligent being who beholds them.

3dly, The only other objection we can think of to our manner of accounting for those moral qualities, by making their offence to consist in a conformity to the Divine will, as the great rule of rectitude, may possibly be drawn from the difficulty which some may suppose in investigating or determining this conformity : Our ideas (may some say) of the Supreme Being, or conceptions of his nature and will may be very different, and must not (upon the present hypothesis) our ideas of whatever depends upon it be so likewise ? Besides, that our rule of action would need to be plain and obvious in all circumstances, and to all capacities, but if the Divine will is not always so, how can it be the rule ? How shall we be always informed of it, or have it present with us, and, in any diversity of opinions with respect to it, how shall we determine on what side the truth lies ? The first part of this objection, or what arises from the difficulty that may sometimes be supposed in investigating and ascertaining what is the Divine will, so as to be always informed of it, and have it present with us as our *rule* of action and moral rectitude ; this part of the objection, I say, will be removed, by a proper attention

tion to the ends and office of Conscience, as they are to be set forth under the two following questions; from which, I hope, it will appear, that sufficient provision is made for informing us of whatever is most necessary to be known by us in this case, and the rule of duty, and of all religious and moral rectitude, made clearer than upon any of the other hypotheses mentioned : As the will of God is the rule, *Conscience* is the guide or instructor he has given us with respect to it ; a guide to which all intelligent beings, who can be supposed accountable for their conduct, have access, be their difference otherwise, as to their circumstances or capacities, what it will. And,

As to the *second* part of the objection, arising from the " Diversity of opinions " that may and do sometimes take place " with respect to the moral qualities of the " same actions, though all have this in- " ward guide or monitor," we shall have occasion to suggest what may be necessary in answer to it on the fifth and sixth questions mentioned ; where we shall have an opportunity of shewing what occasions the diversity complained of, even in such sentiments as are supposed to be the dictates of conscience ; what regard is due to it notwithstanding this ; how we may know its uncorrupted

uncorrupted suggestions, and whether a proper regard is paid to them, and, consequently, how far *accountableness* follows, *i. e.* how far we are justified or not, by our having its approbation or disapprobation.

We now proceed therefore, in the order in which these questions were at first proposed, to consider the

III. Question, which we mentioned, and on which we may be a little more plain and practical ; *namely*, what are the *ends or purposes* which *Conscience* answers in the human constitution, or, for which, our wise and merciful Creator implanted this principle in us ? We have no reason to believe, that he has given the lower orders of his creatures any such principle, and must therefore conclude, that there is something distinguishing in our constitution which requires it ; what this is, we may easily see ; he has given us *free powers of action here*, and made us *accountable* for our use of these powers *hereafter* : The consideration of this may teach us the ends or purposes for which this principle of Conscience was given us, first as respecting our conduct in this life, and, secondly, as respecting the account we are to give after it.

1st Then, with respect to this life, the end for which Conscience was given us is plainly

plainly to regulate our conduct in it, or direct us in the exercise of those *free powers* of acting, by which God has distinguished us from the inferior creation ; for, as we cannot, in this infant state, have such clear and irresistible views of the Author and end of our being, with what he requires of us in all circumstances, as might retain us in our duty and obedience, without some continual *Remembrancer* or teacher ; if God had not given us such a one ever present with us, we would not have known when we used the liberty or freedom of actions given us for our own destruction ; we would have been at a loss every moment to know, in the different circumstances in which we may be placed, what is right for us to do, and agreeable to the will of God : As he has here veiled his glory from our mortal eyes, and is not the object of sensible perception, it was necessary he should appoint a witness or vicegerent in our own breasts, for intimating his will to us, till he see fit to admit us to his blissful sight and presence, and give us as it were an intuitive discovery of his will ; such a witness or vicegerent to him is *Conscience*, so that, when we have been at all due pains to inform it, we are, in some measure, as much called to attend to its directions as if he delivered his law to us from Mount Sinai with as loud thunder as he did to the children Israel.

As.

As matters stand with us at present, therefore, we have an easy way of being directed what to do in every different situation of life ; we have only to ask our own hearts, and they will, either immediately, or, upon very little reflection, declare for what is right, their very first motions, will generally be towards it, so that we shall generally find it easier to see our duty than to mistake it, there being few or no instances of any thing required of us by God, about which we can be long in the dark, or at a loss what measures to take : Can a man, long be at a loss to know whether he should preserve his neighbour's life, goods, or reputation, when in his power ? Can a man, in plentiful circumstances, long doubt, whether he should relieve his brother in distress, or the poor man, if he should be humble, grateful and resigned ? No sure, he who truly makes *conscience* of his duty in all relations, is very seldom in danger of mistaking it, so as to be an unnatural parent, or an undutiful child ; an oppressive master, or a disobedient servant ; an unjust ruler or a rebellious subject ; conscience (if hearkened to) will point us out our duty in all these circumstances, and indeed, were it not that we are persuaded of every man's having naturally such a principle for the direction of his conduct, we could

could not depend upon one another in any one instance, we should, every moment, have our lives, fortune and every thing that is dear to us, in danger, if another could receive any advantage by our loss of them.

That this would inevitably be the case, that, if there were no restraints from conscience, there could be no dependence upon one another's assistance and good offices; appears plainly from the behaviour of those, who, by a continued course of disregard to its directions, seem, for a time at least, to have scared and suppressed it so far, as to make no *Conscience* of any thing they do or say; would any man depend on such as these, or chuse to have dealings with them, in any thing where they could think it there interest to deceive him? Without conscience, therefore, there could be no sure bond of human society, no firm principle of union and mutual dependence among men, more than among a herd of wild beasts; their superior capacities would serve only to make them the more dangerous to one another: By this inward monitor, it is that the will of God is made known to us, and our own wills restrained from these enormities, which we would otherwise run into.

Nor can any of us charge conscience with negligence and partiality in the discharge of its office; it may sometimes be blinded

blinded, and, as it were lulled asleep by the enchantment of surrounding temptations; it may be silenced or misled by the force or false lights of passion, but it never fails, when awakened and set right, to attack its unhappy deceiver with three-fold violence and severity.

It may perhaps be asked, Where do we see conscience answering this great end of regulating human life? Or what effects do we see it have on the manners of mankind? To this it may be answered, that, in the present corrupt state of mankind, it is indeed too little followed and attended to, yet we still see enough of its influence and effects to convince us of its unspeakable importance: To see it discharging its office with all due authority and integrity, we must look at Nature in its native forms and genuine simplicity; it is not the courts of Princes we are to survey, or palaces of the great; these may mask the truth from its view, and thereby mislead its judgment, neither are we to look for it in the abandoned seats of vice and debauchery; if any thing like human nature is to be found in these, it is human nature subverted and divested of every principle and disposition becoming it: If we would see *Conscience* in its proper exercise, so as to judge how far it answers the great end of regulating human

life, and intimating to us the will of our Maker, we may find it in the peaceful retired abodes of purity and innocence, in the humble cottage of the peasant unaccustomed to the refined pernicious arts of self-delusion and disguise, or in the youthful breast, as yet untainted with the reigning pollutions of the world; not but that some men both may and do keep a good conscience, or obey its uncorrupted suggestions, in any age or situation of life; to deny this, would be going against both reason and experience; but it is certain, that, in the present corrupt state of the world, that age or station of life, which is most detached from it and its ensnaring delights, must be also most friendly to innocence, and allow conscience its proper authority and sway in the direction of life. From which it becomes still more evident, that this is a principle originally and essentially inherent in our nature, and not any thing acquired or induced by education, custom, prejudice, or the like, because, (as was just now observed) it prevails and operates most where there is least acquaintance with the world, and consequently fewest opportunities of acquiring any habits, opinions, or principles from it, for the conduct of life.

Thus, then, we see the wise ends that conscience answers in our constitution, with respect to this life.—Let us next

2. Consider

2. Consider it, as respecting *another life hereafter*, and we shall see some further ends for which it was given us; these are to represent to us, in some measure, the *future consequences* of our behaviour, or give us a *foretaste* of the rewards and punishments to be dispensed in a future state of retribution, so as to check and encourage us, according to the tenor of our conduct, and thereby prepare us for justifying the future judgment that shall be passed upon us: Hence it is that conscience is called our accuser and our witness, giving testimony for or against us. All God's ways with us, both in this life and the next, will be found to be truth and judgment; he accuses no man that is not accused of his own mind, neither has he left us the smallest grounds of doubt about the actions which we are accountable for; the tribunal for judging of them is erected in our own breasts, and conscience is also called the judge who passes sentence on us, condemning or acquitting us here, in the same manner that it will do hereafter before the great Judge of the world.

With what fidelity conscience does all this, experience must sufficiently teach every one of us; happy were we, if we knew it only by the approbation it gives; but alas! such is the prevalence of sin and corruption, that the best of men feel it likewise

sometimes in its condemning capacity, and those who have ever done so, can speak the attending anguish and compunction of mind, just earnest of its future severity in preying on impenitent sinners; but if its office, in such circumstances as these, in alarming us to prevent our own undoing, and leading us to timeous repentance; if, here, I say, it be so ungrateful, how abundantly is it made up by that heart-felt joy and delight, with which it rewards every virtuous action and disposition? Put all the pleasures of sin and sense together, they will never equal that inward peace or complacency of spirit, which the good man feels in the exercise of true justice, piety, and devotion; this is indeed heaven in the soul, a happy presage and anticipation of the unmixed, uninterrupted joys that follow it in those blissful climes, where purity and peace for ever reign.

Such then are the ends, which conscience answers in the human constitution, both with respect to this life and the next.—We proceed to the

IV. Question that occurs with respect to conscience, which is (as before stated,) to consider how far its province or office, properly extends?

Agreeably

Agreeably to the account formerly given of *conscience*, some distinguish between *natural* conscience, respecting those actions which tend to natural good or evil, *moral* conscience respecting moral actions and affections which relate to men, and *religious* conscience respecting our religious conduct or duty to God; but only the two last seem, in propriety, to deserve the name; nor is there any great reason for distinguishing these two from one another, further than is necessary, in order to describe the proper office and province of conscience, which, more generally, respects the whole compass of our duty, * as divided into these two great branches, what relates to God, and what relates to man: These are the only beings with which we can discover ourselves, in our present state, to be morally or religiously connected; towards them only, therefore, can any duties or offices be required of us; we have no such connection with superior created spirits, as to lay a foundation for duty to them; nor have we any such relation to inferior and irrational beings, that our conduct towards them, can be justly denominated matter of conscience; this has for its object such offices only, as have respect either to God or to man.

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But

* See this further illustrated and explained in the fourth Dissertation, part second.

But tho' for explaining these two great branches of duty the more clearly, they be thus distinguished, yet are they in themselves inseparably connected, and their obligation founded on the same authority; God has, by injoining our duty to one another, made the performance of it an expression of our regard and duty to himself also: Nor can it ever be expected that our duty to man, to one another, can be steadily performed, or the discharge of it sufficiently secured, unless a regard to God take place; but we shall, for distinctness, take a general view of these two separately: And,

1. As to our duty to *God*, about which conscience is exercised, the justest view we can have of it is, from considering the relation in which we stand to *God*, as all human virtue or duty consists in our acting towards other beings agreeably to the relation in which we stand to them: As therefore, God bears to us, undeniably, the relation of our Creator and Preserver, to which we may add, that of our Redeemer and Sanctifier, as set forth in scripture, he has an unquestionable right to us, and to our services; from him our all is derived, and to him it should be devoted; so that our duty to him, or that about which conscience is exercised, extends to these three particulars; *knowledge, worship and obedience.*

First

First, As to what respects our knowledge of God ; Conscience points it out to us as our duty, that we use the powers and advantages he has given us, either all in common, or each in particular, for informing ourselves, as far as our present state will admit, of his nature, perfections, and the manifestations he has made of his will, either in a natural or supernatural way to mankind, and, upon acquainting ourselves in some measure with these, it is our duty, by frequent and serious reflection on them, to impress our minds with such an abiding sense of them, as may be ever present with us for enlivening our affections and influencing our conduct towards him.

In consequence of our having such a devout sense and impression of these, it follows :

Secondly, that we are to pay him those acts of worship and homage, which we thus see to be due to him, in the relations mentioned, and, according to the knowledge obtained of him, as a Being possessed of all possible perfections, ever exercised by him for the general good and welfare of his creatures, who depend upon his providence and grace for all that they do or can enjoy ; such acts of worship due to him may be considered as external or internal ; and the chief of them are, prayer to him for what

what we *want*, and *praise* to him for what we *have*. The

Third branch of our duty to *God*, as intimated to us by *Conscience*, is *obedience* (which, in the present condition of human nature, includes *repentance*) that is, serving or obeying him, according to the knowledge we have got of his will, either by the light of nature or revelation ; our obligation to which flows from our relation to and dependence upon him, with his consequent right to us, in the different ways formerly mentioned ; from his having given us a being, and free powers of acting, so that we must be *accountable* to him for the use we make of them ; as also, from the *sanc-*
tions of *rewards* and *punishments*, enforcing his law, and to be dispensed on giving him an account of our obedience.

Thus far does the province of *Conscience* extend, in what respects our duty to *God*. The other great

Second branch of our duty, and to which *Conscience* extends, is that which has respect to *men*, and which is likewise to be deduced from a view of the *relations*, either general or particular, in which we stand to them ; more *generally* these are, our being all the offspring of one common parent, partakers of the same common nature, members of the same body or system. The duties arising

ing from this general relation, which we all, as men, bear to one another, may be reduced to these two general heads, *equity* and *love*.

1st, *Equity*, that is, such an equality in our views, sentiments, and conduct, with respect to *others*, such a substitution of ourselves in their cases, and comparison of them with our own, as will direct both our feelings and actings with respect to them, and lead us to judge of them and deal with them, in the same manner that we think they ought to do as to us, in like cases and circumstances: Every one is ready to acknowledge the reasonableness of this rule; and, were we but equally ready to apply it to practice, there is no circumstance of life we can be engaged in, in which it would not direct our conduct with respect to others. The

Second branch of our duty to men, and that from which every kind office proceeds, is *Love*, or the bearing them such a degree of affection, as is suited to the general or particular relation in which we stand to them, and endeavouring, by the exercise of *universal benevolence and charity*, to promote their happiness to the utmost of our power, according to the several *circumstances* in which they and we are placed, and our consequent

consequent relations to one another just now mentioned.

This, therefore, may suffice for giving such a general view of the province or office of *Conscience*, and objects about which it is exercised, as may (with the addition of what shall be offered on the two remaining questions) enable us, without much casuistry, to judge of the morality of our own actions, and form such measures of conduct for ourselves, as are suited to the relations in which we stand to *God* and to *men*. The

V. Question, with respect to Conscience, is, Wherein the regard due to it consists, and how far its judgment justifies?

If we consider what has been already advanced on this subject, with respect to the nature and operations of *Conscience*, and the objects about which it is exercised, we shall find that the *regard* due to it consists in these two particulars,

1. *Informing* it carefully, by a proper and previous exercise of *reason*, examining the nature and tendency of actions. And,

2. *Following* steadily its directions, when thus *informed*, or regulating our conduct by it, as it was for this end, we saw, that it was given us.

These two particulars, the *informing* and *following* or *obeying* *Conscience*, we shall endeavour

deavour to explain a little further, and shall thereupon be enabled to determine how far its approbation justifies.

1. Then, by *informing Conscience*, is meant a fair and diligent exercise of our reason, for examining the nature or tendency of any action we are in doubt about ; that we may know how far it is *agreeable* to what we saw was our duty to God or man, and so to be approved and performed as *good*, or *contrary* to it, and so to be condemned and avoided as *evil*, or, in fine, neither commanded nor forbidden, and therefore *indifferent*.

This is the *information* necessary to be given Conscience before it can pass a right judgment on our actions ; nor will it be such a difficult matter as may at first be thought : To inform ourselves thus in every circumstance of life in which we can be engaged, or, at least, in which we can have any doubt about the lawfulness of our actions, *God* has given us sufficient means of information with respect to them, and has so ordered our situation, that, however high our sphere of life may be, the same actions or measures of conduct recur to be often practised ; so that informing ourselves once with respect to them is sufficient, while the circumstances continue the same, and such *principles* or *rules* of conduct, as we

we are once in our own Conscience satisfied about, may afterwards be steadily proceeded upon, without new inquiries in every particular instance that occurs; but the more steadily we resolve to follow these rules of conduct, without the labour of new inquiries, the more reason have we for being at the utmost pains in examining them, before we lay them down as maxims to walk by; and particularly, we would need to beware, lest passion, interest, prejudice, self-partiality, or the like, determine us in forming our opinions of the good or evil of actions; for these can never alter the *nature of things*, as, in themselves, right or wrong.

We observed already, that conscience may be said to hold the place of *judge* in our minds; how then can we expect that its sentence should be just and fair, if the evidence given it be not so likewise? in fine, though the difficulty of thus *informing Conscience*, were much greater than it is, it must be undergone, if we would either approve ourselves to our supreme Judge, or even save our own minds the tortures that arise from a discovery of any former errors, which we might by greater care have avoided: There are, alas! too many instances, in all ages, of the dismal effects of men's acting even from conscience, though one of the noblest and most necessary principles implanted

implanted in the human breast ; the case here is the same as with many other things useful and valuable to us, the more useful and necessary they are, when well regulated and applied, the more hurtful and pernicious do we find the same things to be, when ill managed or applied ; thus it is with conscience, it may be called the *guide* of human life, but, if it is misinformed or instructed in the wrong way, we must be in as bad a case, or worse, than if we had no guide at all : The execrable practices of the Jews will be a lasting monument of the fatal effects of judgments thus misled; in many acts of inhumanity committed by them, some of them might have acted from conscience, and have had it, in some measure, void of offence ; but as a well informed conscience, void of offence, is the highest human attainment, and carries heaven and happiness along with it, so a misinformed and misled conscience void of offence, if said to be attended with any kind of happiness or tranquillity, it must be the most melancholy and undesireable we can conceive, like that of a blind man walking carelessly on the brink of a precipice, or of one who sleeps securely in a house on fire, ready every moment to be awakened amidst the rage of merciless flames.

Thus then we see in what manner *Conscience* should be *informed* with respect to the nature, tendency, and obligation of our actions, and the necessity of thus *informing* it, if we would have the comfort arising from its approbation at present, without any danger of fatal consequences to follow its security hereafter.

2. The other thing we observed to be necessary in order to our paying a proper regard to *Conscience*, is, that when we have thus taken all due pains to inform it, we steadily *follow* its directions, or regulate our conduct by it : We need not take up much time in explaining this; all that is implied in it is, that, agreeably to the knowledge we have got of our duty to God and man, and the consequent rules or measures of conduct we have laid down and approved, we do, in every circumstance of life, regulate our behaviour; attending carefully to what our own minds direct us, to as right; there is no reason to fear that *Conscience* will neglect its office, or fail to direct us, at the very first, agreeably to the information it receives; but the great source of our miscarriages in life is, that, when *Conscience* thus speaks to us, if it opposes our prevailing desires and inclinations, we endeavour to silence it by force, or soothe it by some false reasonings till the passion is gratified; then indeed we perhaps

perhaps become calm and sober, and are forced to hear and feel it, but we hear it in accents of terror reproaching and condemning us, we feel it wounded by our neglect, and, in revenge, preying on our vitals. It has indeed good reason to complain when disregarded, for its judgment is founded upon an *intimate* knowledge of our actions, and the true springs and ends of them; so that, though other men may, through ignorance of these, condemn or approve of us unjustly, it does not; its judgment is *impartial*, it is not like to be unfavourable to ourselves, if we pay a proper regard to it, nor indeed will it flatter us; in a word, its judgment is free from all *compulsion*, and can be forced by none but as we ourselves give cause for it.

Here however it must be observed, that, even in paying the regard to conscience, which we have been recommending as necessary to happiness, there may be a *scrupulous exactness* and delicacy, very unfriendly to our own happiness, and that of others whom we are connected with: This is indeed, an error we seldom fall into, but as it may and does happen sometimes, we shall endeavour here to describe it, in order to our being on our guard against it.

From what has already been said with respect to conscience, we see, that its office

consists in these three particulars ; in leading us to approve what is good, to condemn what is evil, and to be entirely *indifferent* about what appears to be in itself *neither good nor evil*, that is, neither to approve or condemn it ; hence it follows that there is also a threefold misapplication of the office of conscience when it is ill informed, namely, That it may judge that to be good which is evil, that to be evil which is good, and that to be good or evil which is in its own nature *indifferent*; and pursue or avoid it accordingly.

The two first of these mistakes, by calling good evil, and evil good, we sometimes see and condemn in one another, as arising from a wrong information of conscience with respect to the nature of the things judged of. The third mistake is what we here take notice of, the reckoning things to be good or evil which are in their own nature *indifferent*, neither commanded nor forbidden ; from which false notion of them, arises that mistaken *delicacy* and *scrupulousness* which we blame in some, who seem to make things matter of conscience that are in themselves neither good nor evil : This we plainly see arises, as the other mistakes mentioned, from want of due care in informing our own minds as to what is really right or wrong, commanded

or

or forbidden; and, as it lays in a very unnecessary fund of anxiety and uneasiness for ourselves, by making us as earnest in the pursuit and performance of these indifferent things, and as unhappy when we fail of them as if they were of the greatest moral or religious importance; every one must see how much it is his interest either to prevent or avoid such mistaken notions of things; which can be done only by what has been already recommended, by enquiring diligently into the nature and tendency of the things we thus judge of, that we may inform ourselves how far they are really good or evil, commanded or forbidden either by reason or revelation, or entirely indifferent, and pursue or avoid, approve or condemn them accordingly.

It was for want of such an examination as this, and from their consequent attachment to things in themselves trivial and indifferent, that the Jews are charged by our Saviour with omitting, on their account, the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: Such is the narrowness of our minds, that too many pursuits distract our attention, so that in this, as well as in other respects, whoever is encumbered about many things is in great danger of neglecting the most needful; the case here is the same as with a delicate palate, which,

by too great nicety in the choice of food, threatens almost the same ruin to the constitution which an undistinguishing taste does, that makes no difference at all between what is wholesome and what is not.

After thus giving some account of the regard and obedience due to conscience, we proposed further, on this question, to consider *how far its approbation justifies an action.*

It is no uncommon thing to see very opposite actions approved and performed from the same principle of conscience, and the innocence of error thence maintained; it can never be supposed that these opposite actions are in themselves equally good and justifiable; and, if they be not, their goodness (it will perhaps be said) must be judged of by some other standard than a principle so variable as conscience would thus appear to be.

In order to a solution of this difficulty, we must consider whether any *other powers* of the mind be exercised about an object previously to conscience's judging of it, and see if the variety may not ly in the exercise of these more than in that of *Conscience.*

When therefore any object of a moral nature is presented to the mind, in order to its being approved or disapproved of, pursued or avoided, if it be an *ultimate end,*

it may be granted that conscience is immediately, and without the previous operation of any other principle or faculty, exercised with respect to it, by approving or condemning it; and in this instance its determinations are the same in all men; they approve and disapprove of the same ultimate ends: But, if the object be only a *mean*, or *subordinate end*, before conscience judges of it, some other powers are employed, as *reason*, in inquiring into the nature of the object, and its tendency to the ultimate end, the conclusions of which may in different persons be very different, according to their degrees of attention, diligence, and the like: It may judge an object to be conducive to the ultimate end when it is not; and on this conclusion or *information of reason* is founded the *approbation of Conscience*, which never fails to approve or disapprove of the object after the same manner in all men, if they have the same views of its nature and tendency. From which these two *inferences* may be drawn in answer to this part of the question:

1. That men's *differing* so much in their opinions and approbation of actions, is rather an argument against their *reason* than against their *conscience*'s doing its duty uniformly and steadily. And

2. That

2. That even the *apprehension* of a man's *conscience* does not *justify* an action, unless it be rightly *informed* by a previous exercise of his *reason* and *understanding* in examining its nature and tendency.

VI. After considering the nature, importance, ends and office of conscience, with the regard due to it, as set forth under the preceding questions; one other inquiry may be added for enabling us to consult and follow it with safety in the numberless variety of cases that may occur, and that is, *How we may know when it is properly exercised, and the regard mentioned properly paid to it?*

For giving some satisfaction therefore as to this part of our inquiry, we shall lay down some *marks* or *evidences*, by which we may judge how far we really *act from conscience*, or if (as is too often the case,) we mistake some less commendable principle for it; for though all men profess to act from conscience, it is plain they take very different and even opposite ways in doing it, and in some cases perhaps, every one thinks his own way the only right one.

Amidst all this contrariety therefore, and difference of principles and practices in following this great guide of human life, *Conscience*, it must certainly be of great consequence

consequence to every one of us, to lay down to himself some general, unalterable, and if possible, universally approved *marks*, by which he may walk safely, and know whether he be really following *Conscience*, or if he be following his passion, humour, interest, prejudice, and the like, as we have reason to fear is often the case.

There are six *marks* by which we may know when *Conscience* operates, and wherever these are wanting, there is reason to fear it is not conscience that directs, but some of the other principles just now mentioned. These are,

1. That *Conscience* is always *disinterested* in its proceedings. 2. It acts *calmly* and *composedly* without passion. 3. It deals *impartially*, and condemns as well as approves. 4. It is always *teachable*, *humble*, and willing to be instructed. 5. It is *peaceful* and ever mindful of the great duties formerly mentioned. And lastly, It disposes us to think as charitably or *favourably* as possible of the sentiments and actions of others.

These we shall explain a little further.

1. (I say) *Conscience* may be known by the *disinterestedness* of its proceedings : If, therefore, we *wish* any opinion to be true, or any action to be lawful and right, before we have at all examined and found it to be

be so, it is a shrewd sign that we act from some other motive than a love of truth and regard to Conscience, that we have a partial eye to something else which will be in great danger of byassing our judgment. We ought, therefore, in all our conscientious enquiries and deliberations to beware of leaning too much to that side, to which our wishes or inclinations carry us, and to divest ourselves, as much as possible, of all these partial views and affections, which may blind our reason and pervert our judgment, and if, upon carefully examining ourselves, we find that we do so, we may look upon it as a sure mark of our acting according to Conscience. The

2. Mark of our doing so in any case is, if we find ourselves reasoning, deliberating and acting with *calmness* and *composure*, with a temper of mind easy to ourselves and others, this shews that we are not determined by passion, as the former mark did our not being determined by interest; a furious turbulent disposition, either in arguing or acting, is the most distant thing in the world from that calm cool state of mind, which a man feels himself in when his Conscience operates and seems truly satisfied with his manner of proceeding. A

3. Mark of our giving due attention to the dictates of Conscience is, that we find

it dealing *impartially* and sometimes remonstrating against us ; such is our present imperfection and corruption, that a compleat obedience, even to the dictates of his own unprejudiced reason and Conscience, is what no man here arrives at, though it be every man's duty to endeavour it; whoever therefore has never felt his Conscience *reproving* him, may be assured, that either he has not been attentive to it, or that its judgment is too much baffled in his own favour, and must be corrected before it can be a fair and impartial guide of his life. If we have a just sense of our own failings and imperfections, we cannot but have some suspicion of the partiality, weakness or treachery of a professed friend who never reproves us at all, but seems entirely pleased with all that we do or say; whereas a judicious mixture of reproofs and commendations, according to our conduct, justly raises our confidence in him : Whoever, therefore, finds his Conscience dealing thus *impartially* with him, may take it for an infallible mark of its doing its office, and of his being in some measure attentive to it, even though he fails of the uniform regard and obedience due to it : Hence follows a

4. Mark of being conscientious or acting from Conscience, namely, the finding ourselves *humble* and *teachable*, ever open
to

to information and conviction from others, according to the evidence and reason with which they support their admonitions. A mind full of itself, full of pride and self-conceit ; has no room for receiving due information, and cannot do Conscience justice in laying the proper evidence before it ; no wonder therefore if it should in this case fail of being a competent guide to action. A

5. Mark is, that whoever does not follow the things that make for *peace*, and does not pay regard to those great ends, those unquestionable points formerly mentioned, which respect our *duty to God and man*, does not pay a just regard to his Conscience, for these are the objects to which it principally has respect, nor will the strictest attention to lesser matters make up for the neglect of them.

6. The last mark mentioned of a man's acting according to *Conscience* is, that the more he does so himself, he will be apt to think the more charitably and favourably of others as doing the same; the reason of which is, not only men's common disposition to judge of others by themselves, even when they are not aware of it, but likewise, that, whoever has fairly and conscientiously examined the chief points in which he differs from others, either as to opinion or practice, will find that there is a good deal of weight even

even in the reasons against himself, and consequently make some allowance for others, who are determined by them, even though their Consciences appear to him misinformed and misled: Any matters of Conscience in which we differ from one another, must always be supposed to have some reasons on both sides, determining us according to our attention and care in considering them, unless where the *great foundations of natural and revealed religion* are concerned, in which either demonstration or the highest moral evidence * takes place; in these indeed it must be owned that nothing but either ignorance or a criminal inattention on one side or another can hinder all men from thinking alike and acting accordingly.

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* It will easily be seen, that even by this is not meant ~~any~~ irresistible evidence, which would take away all excellence from *faith*: Any truth is sufficiently recommended to our *faith*, if it has such evidence as to deserve our *belief* or *assent*, though not such as to extort it; for, even here, some degree of liberty must be admitted, and the liberty that takes place in matters of *faith* seems to lie in the power of attending or not attending to the evidence offered us, rather than in giving or withholding our *assent* when it is offered, or in a power of *believing* without any regard to evidence at all.

DISSERTATION II.

On EXPERIENCE.

THOUGH much may be reasonably objected to Mr Lock's opinion, and that of some others, who would have the human mind, in its beginning, to be a mere *tabula rasa*, without any ideas, principles, or impressions ; yet it cannot be denied, that, when we trace back our own progress, in various branches of improvement, we find ourselves so much indebted to *Experience*, observation and instruction, that were we to suppose even the genius of a *Newton* or *Archimedes* to be entirely cut off from these assistances, so far as they arise from any intercourse with others, we could have no great expectation of their success, in any branch of science, that respects either the ornament or accommodation of human life. It would indeed, in such a case, be less needed ; our intercourse with others begets wants and excites desires, which otherwise we would have been strangers to ; but it likewise awakens our industry and emulation, and unspeakably increases the force of all our active powers, for obtaining what is thus made necessary or important to us.

Our

Our observation of others, and instruction from them, have a powerful effect in this way ; but let us receive never so many instructions, or lay down never so many rules, we shall find that our improvement will proceed but slowly, if *experience* and reflection are not joined, experience repeated in a variety of circumstances, and reflection applying it to these, and extending it to more.

Useful knowledge is to the mind what food is to the body, but while such knowledge is only in idea, it is not so far brought home to the mind, as is necessary to its being formed, nourished, and invigorated by it ; to bring it thus home, or make a proper application of it for these purposes, *experience* and *reflection* must be added to *instruction* and *observation*, and, when they are thus added, any man must be sensible what a different impression is made, and what a different view is got, of all that was formerly the subject, only of theory and abstract contemplation ; he sees it as it were in a different light, and very probably sees, that all the knowledge he had before was very imperfect ; that the subject or science he once thought himself fully acquainted with, has many windings or intricacies formerly unthought of, and varieties of position which could never be studied, foreseen,

or discovered till brought to the touchstone of *experience*.

To say, with Mr *Hume*, that our belief of the connection of cause and effect, together with some other clear deductions of reason, or rather intuitive perceptions of common sense, are drawn only from experience, would be saying too much; nor will it be easy to avoid the imputation of a very dangerous species of scepticism, in matters of faith, if the object of it must be always reduced to the comprehension of reason, and much more if it must be confined to the narrow limits of human experience; but in every branch of knowledge, that has relation to practice, and particularly, in what respects the conduct, the convenience, the support and embellishment of life, it will be found, that, however necessary it is to lay a foundation in reason, yet it is, when experience is joined to reasoning and reflection, that the superstructure is successfully carried on, and accommodated to any useful or important purposes.

That, in order to any kind of improvement, becoming us as men, something more is necessary, than the exercise of our sensible or bodily powers, cannot be denied; otherwise, inferior and irrational animals, might excel us in it, for they have these powers much more lively and acute than we have:

Wherein

Wherein then lies our superiority to them, as men? for we come into the world as ignorant as they; our superiority lies in this, that, though at first equally destitute of knowledge we are more capable of attaining it, capable, not only of perceiving, but of examining and comparing objects, of making such trials and experiments, with respect to their nature, properties, and effects, as are necessary in order to their being made useful to us, of comparing our various trials and experiences one with another, reflecting on them, and reasoning with respect to them in such a manner as may enable us to extend our inquiry and experience farther, and make them subservient to every species of improvement of which we are capable.

I would wish to consider this subject in such a manner, as may be of some benefit to myself and others; and, in order to this, shall,

I. Endeavour to set forth the manner in which *experience*, aided by proper reflection, is made subservient to those *branches of improvement*, which are considered as of most importance in life.

II. Take notice of a few *questions*, that may arise with respect to it, and

Conclude, with laying down some general *canons or maxims* necessary to be attended

R 3 to,

to, in order to our profiting by *experience*, in all the branches of improvement that shall be mentioned.

1. Then, it may be of use to consider the manner in which *experience*, aided by proper reflection, is made subservient to these *branches of improvement* which are most important in life, and which cannot, in any other way, be so successfully conducted.

To begin with *physical knowledge* and improvement, both as it respects natural knowledge in general, and that of the human body in particular, its functions, diseases, and the remedies suited to them; it cannot be denied, that there is some room for *theory* and *reasoning*, according to the knowledge we have of these laws and elementary principles which we reason from: but, in consequence of the modern discoveries with respect to these, might it not be expected, that our progress in physical improvement, would have been much more rapid than before? and yet, with all our present helps, in the way of *theory* and *reasoning*, we do not find this to be the case for our most useful discoveries, are we not indebted, either to *seeming accidents*, or to the labours of those, who had only *experience** for their guide? nor is it likely

* We are indebted to the native Americans for many valuable medicines, as the Peruvian Bark, Ipecacuan, &c.

a way, as does not supersede the exercise of the faculties now mentioned ; but falls in with their natural progress and improvement.

The manner in which *experience* is made subservient to that *religious* and *moral* improvement we are now speaking of, may be easily explained ; to it we owe that knowledge of ourselves, which is of all human knowledge the most important, and which requires our undergoing different trials in different circumstances, before the health and vigour of the mind can either be known or established : Hence we may see the reason why *morality* and *religion* are always taught with most success, by those who speak from their own *experience*, to the experiences of others ; as might be exemplified in the exercise of trust in God, patience, temperance, humility, fortitude, and every virtuous or devout disposition : In choosing a physician, whom we would consult for our health, we would not hesitate to give him the preference, whose *experience* extended most to our own case ; and, for the same reason, in what respects the health and improvement of our minds, the correcting wrong habits, subduing unruly passions, and regulating the whole inward temper and outward deportment, no wonder if we expected most assistance and direction

And as for *commercial* improvement (in which *manufactures* may be included) tho' it be now more than ever reduced to a science (by the management of exchange, without regard to coin or specie, and the union, as it were, of many independent states in one great commercial society) yet, still we find, that every branch of trade or commerce proceeds with much more success, after passing some apprenticeship to *experience*.

The science of *politics* deserves some notice, and the *adepts* in it would be more numerous than in any other, did not inexperience cut off so many; so that the mutability of their systems, and frequent fallacy of their reasonings, must raise some diffidence of the success of every scheme, that is not either warranted, supported, or some way recommended by *experience*.

In the *military art* the case is often different; there have been many instances of success, where the enterprise was not thus recommended: Fortune (as we commonly say) is a female, and sometimes favours the young and inexperienced in a military way; but in such instances of successful temerity, the character of the troops deserves some notice as well as that of the commander; and how seldom has it been found, that those who were raw and undisciplined, equalled the valour of the veterans?

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The art of *prudence* may be here likewise brought under review, or that species of improvement which may be called *prudential*, and which, having relation to the common tenor of our conduct, may likewise be denominated the *science of human life*; it consists in a just discernment of the propriety of actions and characters, with their various events and effects, determining us in different circumstances, to approve and chuse that which will be, in the issue, most conducive to our true interest. There is no case, in which the man of experience (especially if assisted by a little reflection) has more advantage than in this; from a recollection of former cases and circumstances, he judges of the consequences of these he is in at present, and has his hopes or his fears awakened accordingly; he sees sometimes danger, where the inexperienced are not aware of it, and, at other times, a way of extricating himself, unknown to them. Could we improve in prudence, by the experiences of others, it would often save us much trouble and disappointment, but it is remarkable, that these generally serve us little in stead: Every man must learn for himself, or at his own expence, every man must go to the school of *experience*; the instruction he might get at second hand from others, who have been there, will not satisfy:

satisfy him. Tho' we have all heard how dangerous it is, to contract friendships with the selfish, to commit our secrets to those who cannot keep their own, to delay till to-morrow, what we may as easily do to day, or to do by another what we can easily do ourselves, with many other such maxims of *prudence*, yet how few are there who profit by them, till their own *experience* convinces them of their importance?

The only other species of improvement we shall mention, as likewise influenced and promoted by *experience*, is *moral* and *religious* improvement, or that which has more immediate respect to the habits of virtue and devotion, the improvement necessary for immortality. The whole of our present state, may, indeed, justly be considered as a state of trial, discipline and education, with a view to this, and *experience* is our common tutor: Guided by this, through many varieties of life, the mind is gradually formed for superior blessedness: Reason and conscience (faculties which may be called celestial, in their extract and tendency) are exercised in drawing improvement from *experience*, and are assisted by the outward light of revelation, to which we have reason to expect that inward aid and illumination shall be added, when humbly and devoutly implored, tho' communicated in such

a way, as does not supersede the exercise of the faculties now mentioned ; but falls in with their natural progress and improvement.

The manner in which *experience* is made subservient to that *religious* and *moral* improvement we are now speaking of, may be easily explained ; to it we owe that knowledge of ourselves, which is of all human knowledge the most important, and which requires our undergoing different trials in different circumstances, before the health and vigour of the mind can either be known or established : Hence we may see the reason why *morality* and *religion* are always taught with most success, by those who speak from their own *experience*, to the experiences of others ; as might be exemplified in the exercise of trust in God, patience, temperance, humility, fortitude, and every virtuous or devout disposition : In chusing a physician, whom we would consult for our health, we would not hesitate to give him the preference, whose *experience* extended most to our own case ; and, for the same reason, in what respects the health and improvement of our minds, the correcting wrong habits, subduing unruly passions, and regulating the whole inward temper and outward deportment, no wonder if we expected most assistance and direction

fection from those whose *experience* we found to be most extended, diversified, and suited to our own; always supposing it, in this and the other instances mentioned, to be accompanied with such reflection as is necessary to its making a proper impression on the mind, and being applied or brought home, with advantage, to our various cases.

II. After enumerating the various kinds of improvement to which *Experience* is conducive, some notice may be taken of a few **QUESTIONS** that may arise with respect to it. The

1st We shall mention is of a more general nature, respecting the manner in which it operates. How, may it be asked, does it come to have such efficacy, and how may we know our being profited by it? A little attention to the manner in which it proceeds, will clear the whole of this. First, it is remarkable, that *Experience increases caution*; many an important enterprize has miscarried for want of attention to some minute circumstances that could easily have been set right, had they not, through inexperience, been considered as of too little importance to be attended to. A handful of men properly posted, would have prevented the taking of Babylon by Cyrus. A short retreat into the plains of Media, would have made Alexander an easy prey

to Darius. Want of a very little more acquaintance with the construction and use of fire-arms, hinders the modern Asiatic troops from being a match for Europeans; and, as success often depends upon secrecy, I have known an expedition, of no small importance, miscarry by the accidental firing of a single musket.

In any of these instances, had the case been such as to have often recurred, and given occasion of learning, instruction, and *caution* from *Experience*, these minute circumstances would probably have been attended to, and many incidents will occur in history to exemplify the importance of this; but it is, when *Experience* confirms it, that caution is extended even to those lesser matters which are often overlooked; the man of experience will not overlook even what is seemingly small, if it may have important consequences; he is not apt to promise most on his own success, but he always labours most to secure it.

But this useful *caution*, which is increased by *Experience*, is, by no means, to be confounded with that *suspicion*, jealousy, and timidity, which are unmanly and hurtful, and which, when groundless, are rather the natural effects of inexperience, magnifying danger, and inattentive to the means of averting it.

Again, it may be remarked, as another effect of *Experience*, that it lessens *admiration* and *credulity*: Events, actions, and characters, which are objects of much *admiration* to the ignorant and inexperienced, cease to be so, when experience takes place; as might be exemplified in the calculation of eclipses, the construction of mechanical engines, and the like, which we come to wonder less at, upon acquaintance with the laws and principles on which they proceed; nay the frequency, and much more the regularity of the return of any event or object, even though we cannot thus account for it, lessens our *admiration*, else the ebbing and flowing of the sea, the congealing of fluids by frost, the origin of winds and meteors, and many other phenomena in the natural world, which we cannot account for, would excite more of admiration; so that, it would not seem to arise so much from ignorance, as from inexperience: It is not so much the unaccountableness as the uncommonness of any event or object which occasions it: Nothing can be more unaccountable than the effects of lightning and electricity, and yet, when they become common, or when we have frequent experience of them, we cease to wonder at them. Was thunder more common, it would occasion less wonder and dread; (for these two are nearly

nearly allied;) nay, I remember my being told by a gentleman who was in Lisbon, at a time when the shocks of earthquakes were most frequent there, that, on his seeming once to be struck with the apprehension of his feeling one, a lady in the company, who was more accustomed to them, calmly advised him not to be alarmed, for it was *only* an earthquake.

Even women and children may thus become familiar with danger, and yet, through their want of *Experience* they are generally most liable to wonder, surprize, and dread: For the same reason, they are likewise most liable to *credulity*, which always lessens as *Experience* increases, and hinders our confounding what is *marvellous* with what is *miraculous*; these two are very different from one another, but it is experience and reflection that enable us to distinguish them, by extending the former to whatever is *uncommon*, and limiting the latter to what is plainly *unaccountable* by any laws or powers of nature known to us; for, to admit nothing of this kind, to admit of nothing miraculous, would be denying, that in any case, these laws and powers of nature, ever were or could be counteracted by a supernatural agent, which is going against reason and experience: It argues indeed both credulity and inexperience, to suppose that

they should be thus counteracted or interrupted often, and without great and wise ends; but to say, that in no case they should be so, is the language, not only of incredulity, but of a criminal scepticism and infidelity.

Another effect of *Experience* and marks of our profiting by it, is, its lessening, not only *admiration* (as now mentioned) but *vanity*. The young, the giddy, the unexperienced, are most liable to this; but such as have a more enlarged acquaintance with persons and things, with human characters, ends, motives, attainments, and who have had any *Experience* of the instability and unsatisfying nature of them all, will not be so ready to give way to the workings of *vanity*, self-confidence, and self-importance.

The only other effect of *experience* which I shall mention, and evidence of our profiting by it, is its exciting us to *diligence* and *constancy*, knowing what difficulties these have surmounted; how often attainment has exceeded expectation; that, even want of success in our first endeavours of attaining what is valuable, should not hinder the renewing, repeating and varying our efforts for this purpose; that *difficulties* ought not to be confounded with *impossibilities*, as any difficulty will always be lessening according as *experience* increases and gives facility.

2dly.

2dly, *Another question*, as to the doctrine of *experience* is, that if (as is commonly said) it be the effect of *years*, it may be asked, Whence is it that they have not always *this effect*? Whence is it that we meet with many who reap not such improvement from them, or, at least, not so much as others do in less time, What is it that occasions the difference?

To account for this therefore, we may observe, that, though time be necessary to acquire experience, yet this alone is not sufficient; there must be changes of circumstances, trials in different positions, and, which is still more important, there must be a judicious *reflection* on past experiences and attention to the present, examining, comparing, and improving them; wherever therefore, any of these are wanting, when an addition of years (though lengthened out for a whole century) brings no variety, as to action, enjoyment or even suffering (for some degree of this is of use for riveting experience) and, much more, when the mind is engrossed and misled by any wrong passion, pride, prejudice, or an undue attachment to favourite opinions. In all these cases, neither time nor opportunity will be properly improved for acquiring any branch of experience, and profiting by it. A

3d Question of some nicety is, Whether experience or abilities avail most in the various branches of improvement formerly mentioned? That is, Whether a man of parts, without practice and experience, or a man of experience, without parts, is likely to be most successful in prosecuting such improvement, and, which of the two would we chuse to call to our assistance, or intrust with the conduct of any scheme where our character and interest were much concerned?

In answer to this, it may be first observed, that whatever weight either of these two have separately, it is not only doubled, but unspeakably increased by their conjunction with one another: But take them separately, and it will probably be found, that, though such branches of improvement, as require most of study and speculation, seem to have more dependence on the force of genius and extent of capacity, than on *experience*, yet, in every case, where *action* is most concerned, *experience* will be found to contribute most to our dexterity and success. *Lucullus* is indeed often mentioned, as an instance of a great general and conqueror, before he came to have *experience*, but he is so mentioned by historians, because the case is thought so rare; whereas, there are numberless instances on the contrary:

of

of parts misgiving, when destitute of experience, wherever activity and address were necessary.

I remember to have heard, with some amusement, of an eminent teacher of gunnery and fortification, who, in a flight engagement with the rebels, *anno 1745*, took the charge of some artillery, but was found more useless than any of the matroffes: And likewise of another, who taught navigation with great accuracy, but, in a voyage, where he himself went passenger, he run the vessel quite out of her course. An undertaker of this kind, who, in the strength of his theory alone, launches out into action, will often be as much disappointed as one who would venture to plunge into the waves, in reliance on his knowing the rules for swimming, or one who would undertake to travel without a guide because he had read a map of the country.

Action must indeed be ventured on, though with some risk and difficulty, even before *experience* can be acquired, but there will be the more need of caution as to the extent of our undertaking; nor will it proceed so successfully till such experience is acquired, and practice added to speculation. The geographer will have a clearer idea of any country from a short survey of it, than from all the descriptions that were formerly

ly given him. The young orator will improve more by one day's pleading at the bar, than by twenty lectures on rhetorick ; and, the soldier will learn more of the art of war from one active campaign, than from all the Commentaries of Cæsar, or the Memoirs of the renowned Marlborough.

4thly, As we mentioned many branches of improvement, and that no human *experience* can extend equally to them all, it may possibly be asked, Which of them we should prefer, or to which of them our experience should chiefly be directed ? This we propose as a question; that it may give an opportunity of shewing how necessary it is to regulate or limit our application to the different pursuits mentioned ; as our striving to excel in them *all* may hinder our making much proficiency in *any* of them.

So far as *theory* avails, its being thus extended and diversified will not indeed be so hurtful, nay, it may sometimes be useful to us ; but, when it comes to *practice*, if a man expects to be the philosopher, the physician, the mechanic, the farmer, the merchant, the politician, the soldier, the divine, all united in one, he will find himself much disappointed, or rather he will find his attention distracted, by going from one object and pursuit to another, so that he will scarcely come to the desired issue in any of them ;

them ; as the qualities and capacities necessary for excelling in some of them will, very probably, be hindrances to him in others.

First then, it should be every man's endeavour to understand asight *his own business*, employment, or occupation in life, and, to attend both to the *theory* and *practice* of it : The choice of this will probably be determined, either by the bent of his genius, by his ideas of felicity, or perhaps by some outward circumstances independent of his own election or inclination ; but, when once it is chosen and determined, to this should his *experience* and *speculation* be chiefly directed, by proposing to himself the best models or examples of excellency in it, and by a laudable emulation of them. In order thus to improve and excel, reasoning, or theory is necessary, but it is not in this that we are generally most defective, but in maintaining that activity, steadiness, and uniform application necessary for conforming to the theory or rules we are acquainted with, and reducing them with facility to practice.

But, besides that improvement which has respect to our particular profession or business in life, it must be observed, that what we call *religious*, *moral*, and even *prudential*, improvement is to be considered as necessary,

necessary for all without exception, because it has respect to that comfortable and consistent conduct in life on which its happiness depends, and to that preparation or improvement for another life in which we are all equally interested. In the proper exercise, therefore, and improvement of our faculties, the proper restraint of our appetites, and regulation of our passions ; in acquiring right habits, and suiting our conduct to the various relations and circumstances in which we are placed ; in all these consists the practical or experimental improvement now mentioned, both as it has respect to the present life and to that which is to come.—But there remains a

5th Question which may occur on this subject, and that is, How may we *become wise* by the *experience of others*, and how may we know, if we are in the way of becoming wiser than we were by *our own*? Were it not that something is learned from the experience of others, and that every new generation has some benefit by what those who went before them have discovered and experienced, we could not account for mens being any further advanced now in the different branches of improvement formerly mentioned, than they were at first; and yet, that they are so upon the whole, is undeniable ; upon the whole, I say, for it,
 must.

must be owned, that there are some nations whose improvement in these respects, does not as yet appear to extend much beyond what may be supposed to have been their state in the beginning ; and if we can find out what gave others the advantage over them, it may teach us how improvement is to be made of the *experience of others*.

Very little acquaintance with history will convince us, that it is not those parts of the world which were most improved anciently that appear to be so at present; many nations might be mentioned, who have undergone remarkable revolutions in this respect, as Egypt, Greece, Italy, and many others more remote: These revolutions seem, more immediately, to depend upon the different changes they have undergone in respect of their religious and civil establishments, upon their having more or less intercourse with other nations, and upon such discoveries and inventions as appear to be accidental, but in which the particular interposition of providence seems to be most remarkable.

To one or other of these causes may be ascribed the progress of some arts and sciences, and the downfal of others, which thereupon perhaps became less necessary. Thus, when there was less security from war, and while the art of it was carried on in

In such a manner, as made places of strength more necessary, architecture was probably better understood than afterwards. By the extension of commerce, occasioning a dependence of one nation upon another, with regulations thereupon unknown before, and still more, by the invention of fire-arms, the whole *military system* is altered: To the extension of commerce, occasioned by the discovery of the compass, may also be ascribed, not only the art of navigation, but likewise the introduction of many manufactures, the materials for which could not otherwise have been collected.

Some are of opinion, that *music* was in greater perfection among the ancients than now, and that it was more sentimental; but our ignorance of their musical instruments and compositions, makes us unable to judge of this. *Statuary* they probably had in greater perfection, while public games, combats and spectacles were most common; besides that, any later improvement supposed by some in *painting*, gradually supersedes it. In general, we may say, that whatever arts depend only upon strength, skill, application or genius were in as great perfection among the ancients as among us; but whatever could receive improvement from the seemingly accidental discoveries formerly mentioned, and their consequences, or whatever

ver receives improvement from the genius or spirit of the *religion* professed, and civil *government* established, will probably be found in greater perfection in the Christian world at present, than either now or formerly in nations destitute of these advantages.

But to what are we to ascribe the great backwardness that still appears among some uncivilized nations, whose history we read, in respect of almost all the branches of improvement mentioned?

Besides the disadvantages arising from the want of those discoveries and inventions formerly mentioned, it will probably be found, that their want of that union in society with one another, which elsewhere takes place, is one of the greatest obstructions to their improvement: *Social union* may beget wants unknown before, but it makes ample amends by the mutual assistance, intercourse and emulation that arise from it, and more especially, by the security it gives a man in respect of his person and property, and consequently, encouragement to industry and labour, not for bare subsistence, but likewise for the convenience and accommodation of life. Union in society gives a man an opportunity of improving by the experience of his cotemporaries, and when, together with this, there is such an union and acquaintance with former ages, as is

necessary in order to their transactions being properly transmitted to us, we have their experience likewise to build upon, and hence it is, that the invention of *printing* has given an unspeakable advantage for improving in all the different ways formerly mentioned, beyond what could be attained in the ages or times preceding it, and even beyond what these can as yet attain, who are strangers to it, especially if they are every way strangers to the use of *letters*.

The *social union* mentioned is improved, and the advantages arising from it increased by the increase of *cities*, or the greatness of the resort to them, if under proper regulations; and to this union, together with the superior safety, subjection to laws, and encouragement to industry consequent on it; as also, to the extension of commerce and the use of letters and printing, we must ascribe the great superiority of some nations to others at present, in respect of the different branches of improvement formerly mentioned. To which we may add, that, in such of them as have respect to the temper of the mind, and the conduct of life, that is, in what we call religious, moral, and prudential improvement, the genius of *Christianity*, so favourable to the improvement of the heart, in a moral or spiritual way, gives an unspeakable advantage, not to the

mere

mere nominal professors of it, but to those on whom it has its full influence and effect; as being directly opposite to that pride, impurity, injustice, insincerity, inhumanity, indolence, and malevolence, which are the greatest enemies to the real improvement of societies or individuals: This, however, is not what falls under our immediate consideration at present, but the use that may be made of what has been suggested, for teaching us how we are to improve by the *experience of others.*

In order to this, then, we see that a proper intercourse with them is necessary; there must be a communication of knowledge and sentiments with those who are our contemporaries; a proper conveyance of facts from one age to another, and consequent reflection or reasoning, with respect to them; on this, indeed, on a careful and authentic collection of facts, and an attention to the discoveries, the improvements and experiments of others, so as to direct and assist us in our own; on this, I say, depends in a great measure, our progress in the various branches of improvement formerly mentioned: But there must be industry, candor, or some degree of public spirit joined to views of private utility, in order to our making such progress.

As to *prudential* improvement, in particular,
T 2.

ticular, which has respect to the conduct of life, it may perhaps be observed, that in this we avail ourselves less of the experience of others, than in any other kind of improvement mentioned; we will not be taught at the expence of others, but must pay for every lesson of instruction, before we will put any value on it: How few are there (for instance) who value health, peace, plenty, liberty, and many other comforts in life, so as to use the proper means of preserving them, till they experience the consequences of being deprived of them? How much unhappiness might be avoided, was what we see of the ill effects of ungoverned passion, in the case of others, properly brought home to our own? How many misfortunes in families might be lessened, did we, from the experience of others in the education of their children, learn the safest way of conducting it? And, how many miscarriages in life might be prevented, were the wise maxims * of *Solomon*, or even of *Seneca* and *Epictetus*, properly attended to.

So far, however, as such wisdom is to be attained from the *Experience of others* in the conduct of life, it must be, *first of all*,
by

* Plato wrote Heroick Verses, and burnt them as soon as he saw those of Homer: I am almost inclined to do the same with some writings of mine, when I read these here referred to, on the same subjects.

by a proper exercise of the *imagination*, substituting ourselves, as much as possible, in their case; by a proper acquaintance with, and attention to their experience; by reflection and deliberation, till it is compared with our own, and till the consequences of our actions be in some measure foreseen and weighed. Indolence, precipitancy, and pride, are the greatest hindrances* to our improving by the experience of others, and would therefore need to be particularly guarded against, if we would become wise either by their experience or our own.

To the other part of this question, *viz.* How we may know if we are in the way of becoming wiser by *our own experience*? All that needs be said for answer, in addition to what was offered on the first question, is, that in that species of improvement which was last mentioned, and which has respect to the conduct of life, we are not in the way of becoming wiser, unless there be such a sense of past miscarriages, and of the steps that led to them, as prevents their being repeated, and such a consciousness of rectitude, when, from experience, we know that we are in the right way, as may engage us to perse-
vere

* To mutual hurt by gusts of *Passion* driven,
And suffering more from folly than from fate.
YOUNG.

vere in it, whatever temptations, incitements, or persuasion, we may have to the contrary.

The increase of wisdom gathered from *Experience*, is like the increase of our years and stature, not easily attended to or discovered till we have made some progress: But he who, upon reviewing his past progress in life, finds that some temptations, which foiled him formerly, are now easily resisted; that some duties which he reckoned difficult are become delightful to him, and that there are some distresses which he once thought intolerable, to which he is now reconciled; whoever finds diligence and caution increased, while security and self-conceit are diminished, needs not doubt of his having become wiser by his past experience.

But, as to all the other branches of improvement mentioned in a physical, mechanical way, &c. we cannot be at a much greater loss in discovering, upon a proper review, how far our *Experience* has availed us, than we can be in discovering, from the inspection of our coffers and accompts, how much richer we are to-day than we were yesterday, this year than the last: Nor is the pleasure of the ingenuous less, upon a discovery of their progress in the former, than that of the avaritious upon a view of the latter. A lesson of improvement, in any way, that is acquired

quired from our own experience, from, perhaps, accidental discoveries, or from repeated trials judiciously varied and persisted in ; if it costs us dearer, it will stick longer to us, and give unspeakably more of satisfaction than what is acquired from the Experience, observation, or instruction of others.

In dispensatories of physic, where the ingredients of different medicinal preparations are recited, there are commonly some *Canons* subjoined, as necessary to be attended to in the composition of them, and equally applicable to them all : I would gladly follow this method here, and subjoin, as was proposed, by way of

Conclusion. Some *canons* or *maxims*, which, in the course of the preceeding inquiry, appear necessary to be attended to, in order to our profiting by *Experience*, in the various branches of improvement formerly mentioned.

1. (Then) There must be a careful and distinct remembrance of past experiences, in order to improve by them in time coming.

[Hence appears the advantage of *diaries* and daily *memoirs*, to these who are engaged in many important scenes of life, and an entire forgetfulness or inattention in this way, will occasion a species of folly and incapacity for the business of life. We have here said that the remembrance of past

past experience would need to be *distinct*, in order to improve by it, because the omission or alteration of a seemingly small circumstance, may in some cases, make a very great difference as to the consequences; so that]

2. There must be a just *comparison* of *circumstances* before we can argue from *Experience*, or improve by it.

[Upon his experience, of the benefit got by *Augustus* from the use of the cold bath, *Antonius Musa* prescribed it to *Marcellus*, but there was some difference in the cases, and the result was fatal to the latter.]

3. *Experience* will be most useful when supported or explained by *reasoning*, but it may have no small usefulness even when it is not.

[The discovery of the circulation of the blood enables us to reason usefully, with respect to many phenomena in the human constitution; but, though the existence or circulation of a nervous fluid has never as yet been ascertained, and consequently, there can be no such reasoning with respect to it, yet our experience of the effect of opiates and other nervous medicines, may be of no small use to us, even when we cannot account for it.]

4. *Ex-*

4. *Experience corrects errors of the imagination and senses**, but the *understanding* must correct its own.

[Many objects appear to the eye and ear to be very near us, which experience shows to be distant. By experience the illiterate clown comes to know that the resemblances he sees of the neighbouring objects in the water, are no more than shadows, and, by experience, the wise man comes to know that the gaudy vanities of life, which are often so finely painted by the imagination, are likewise empty shadows. Thus may the senses and imagination be corrected by experience, but the *understanding* must correct itself: Though the errors it imbibes may be called its poison, yet they are not to be expelled by force, it will not part with them till satisfied, from its own examination of them, that they are errors; any change we would work upon it cannot be by compulsion, but by persuasion.]

5. *Experience can extend no farther than the region of possibilities*, but *imagination* sometimes wanders beyond it.

[Experience teaches us that it is impossible that many things which are done by *legerdemain* men can be what they appear, but

* i. e. It examines and corrects the perceptions of one sense by those of another, as seeing, by feeling in our judgment of the distance of objects here mentioned.

but the imagination of the mob will sometimes lead them to expect their performing what is as impossible as that a part should be greater than the whole.]

6. In order to profit by experience it must be pushed with *patience* and *perseverance*.

[Had Columbus yielded to the impatience and importunities of his mariners, he had never discovered America. Had the great and good Mr Boyle been discouraged by every unsuccessful experiment, he had never made such discoveries in natural philosophy, from the air-pump, &c. and had Harrison given up all hopes of discovering the longitude in the 20th year of his search, he would not have been so liberally rewarded by the public nine years after.]

7. To make *Experience* subfervient to the success of any science, there must be no undue attachment to any favourite *hypothesis* or *theory*, unsupported.

“ *Natura abhorret vacuum*,” was an hypothesis of more than 2000 years standing; consecrated by its antiquity, it was transmitted down safely from Aristotle to Descartes, as an hypothesis of undoubted verity, till confuted by the discovery of the air-pump, and a door thereby opened to many other useful discoveries which were never before attempted; as being thought absurd and impossible.

'In the same manner an immoderate and unreasonable attachment to the Ptolemaic system of the heavens, however ridiculous it now appears, prevented much credit's being given to Copernicus, and all that improvement in astronomy which arises from the confirmation and belief of his doctrine.]

D I S S E R.

DISSERTATION III.

On PROVIDENCE.

THERE are some subjects of human enquiry, not only above our present comprehension, but which we are often bewildered in examining, and yet their importance is so great, in respect both of the regulation and comfort of human life, that it is necessary for us to endeavour the coming at some determinate notions with respect to them. Such is the doctrine of *Providence*, a doctrine of natural as well as of revealed religion, and of great consequence both as to faith and practice ; but no complaint is more common than that of its being very dark and mysterious ; if the ground of this complaint be, that we are unable thoroughly to comprehend it, nothing is less to be wondered at. The providence of God has respect to his government of the world ; now, we do not or should not wonder, even in human governments, if we should often be unable to see through the whole of their views and measures to whom the task of government is committed, and whose charge and study it is more particularly : Their measures would be but ill concerted, and easily baffled,

shed, if every shallow politician could see through them. Much more then may it be said, that we are all such shallow politicians as to the ways of God *; the ways and measures of the supreme Governor are far above out of our sight; it may however be remarked, that, in order to see more of them, it is not what the world calls great acuteness or capacity that we have most need to seek after, but a certain singleness of heart, humility, and the fear of God, a careful attention to his providences, reflecting on what are past, and comparing them with the present, if we would form any judgment of what is future; and, as to all this *science* of providence, "God's secret is with them who fear him."

But, after all, though only a small part of God's ways is thus known, yet this is not so much the matter of wonder and complaint with others, as that, even in what is known (in respect of its present effects) they should often find such a difficulty of reconciling it to his wisdom, his righteousness and his mercy.

But if the truth of any proposition can once be proved, all the difficulties that appear must not hinder our belief of it, even supposing them such as we are unable fully

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* It would rather be an argument against the infinite wisdom of Providence, if creatures, so limited as we are in knowledge, could see through much of its plans or designs.

to remove ; no objection can avail but such as proves it either contrary to reason or revelation, and to suppose such contrary proofs on both sides of a question would be absurd, it would be supposing a proposition to be true and false at the same time.

To apply this, therefore, to the doctrine of Providence, we shall

I. Endeavour to explain and establish what it is that we are warranted, both by reason and revelation, to believe with respect to it, and the improvement fit to be made of it, and

II. The objections to it shall be considered, and whether we can give a satisfying solution of them or not, they must be supposed such as will admit of it, was our knowledge of the subject more complete.

1. Then, let us consider, what it is that we are warranted, both by reason and revelation, to believe with respect to providence, meaning thereby " God's superintendence " over his creatures for their direction " and preservation," so as to make them subservient to those ends for which they were brought at first into being, and which we cannot conceive to be any other than a display of the glory of their Creator, not in the limited, and often corrupt sense in which glory is commonly spoken of among men, and opposed to the general good, but as intimating a display of his glorious perfections, in the way of communicating such degrees

degrees of perfection and happiness to his creatures as their natures are capable of; and, in order to this, recovering them to, and retaining them in a conformity to the original law of their creation.

The lower ranks of creatures, both animate and inanimate, cannot vary from the laws of their creation, but seem, by the necessity of their natures, to move on uniformly, towards those ends for which they were created. The heavenly bodies have certain stated revolutions assigned them, which they regularly perform according to God's original appointment; the gross material bodies around us have also certain laws which they invariably obey, as the brutes do those appetites and propensities given them for their own preservation, and for making them subservient to the purposes of man; but man himself, for whose use, we have reason to believe, all these inferior orders of creatures were designed, has not only certain laws and propensities in common with them, as being, in respect of his body, material and sensible, but is also endowed with higher powers, enabling him to know and enjoy God, the supreme Author of his being, and had a freedom of will given him, by which he was left to choose which of the two he would follow, either his body with its senses and appetites,

so as to debase his nature and set him on a level with the brutes, or those nobler powers which fit him for an intercourse with his Maker, in the spiritual exercises of serving, loving, and adoring Him, who is the fountain of all being and perfection.

Either of these two ways man is at liberty to choose, either the obedience and gratification of sense, or the obedience and enjoyment of God ; the powers of reason and understanding were given him to direct his choice, and, upon the first declaration that was made of God's not being the object of it, that unhappy departure from him commenced, by which the principles of our nature were first corrupted ; so that, now, the administration of providence is suited to us, not only as we are *men*, but likewise as we are *sinners*, and made subservient to his gracious designs for our recovery to perfection and happiness ; for our recovery (as it was before expressed) into a conformity to the original law and end of our creation. The

1st Thing therefore we shall mention, as well warranted and necessary to be attended to here, is " Our having a firm belief of " Providence itself, particularly as extending to all human actions and concerns, " and as opposed to fate on the one hand, " and blind chance on the other."

We

We scarcely read of a nation among the antients that was not divided into three different sects, according to the different opinions they held with respect to this.

Some professing to believe a supreme over-ruling Providence, extending, as was said, to all human actions and concerns ; others maintaining that they were determined by a fatal necessity ; and others that all happened by chance, without any fixed design or direction.

The antient heathen philosophers were divided into three sects, according as they espoused one or other of those opinions ; these were the Epicureans, who ascribed all to chance ; the Stoicks, who believed in fate ; and the Academics, who would seem to have admitted of Providence. The Jews were in the same manner divided into three sects, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes ; and the same diversity of opinions has, in some degree, descended to the various religious denominations of our own times.

The arguments from *reason* in proof of a Providence are many and unanswerable.

1st. It may be argued *a priori*, from God's omnipresence, and his perfections, which must be exercised, and their exercise is his providence.

Is not this way of reasoning *a priori*, you'll say, too abstract and refined to work

general conviction ? I answer, It may be so in some cases, but not in all : On the contrary, in all our reasonings from cause to effect, so far as they are founded in any kind of theory, they may be said to be *a priori*. There must indeed be another method used before we arrive at this theory : There must be induction, or a collection of experiments ; we must argue *a posteriori*, from experience or observation of effects, before the nature of subordinate causes can be in any measure investigated, so as to argue from them ; but, when this is once done, the reasoning *a priori* may proceed successfully.

With respect to the Supreme or *first cause*, indeed, though it might be thought that there could be no reasoning *a priori*, yet it has been attempted, and with some success. The sum of this celebrated argument, so far as it respects the existence of the *first cause*, is briefly this,

We cannot conceive of an endless series of causes, or of any thing's being its own cause, without involving us in the absurdity and contradiction of supposing effects without causes, *i. e.* of their being effects and their not being effects, of their existing and not existing at the same time ; so that, in tracing the origin or source of existence, the idea of *self-existence* always breaks in upon

upon us, as also ideas of *space* and *duration* which we cannot limit. *Self-existence*, *eternity*, and *immensity* are thus, according to our ideas, necessary, *i. e.* their not taking place, would imply a contradiction ; but as all these are only modes of existence, or *attributes*, we must conclude that there exists necessarily a *Being*, to whom these attributes of self-existence, eternity and immensity or infinity, belong.

This is all the length that the argument can be supposed to proceed *a priori* ; and, even here, it may be said, that, as accounting for these ideas in us, is the foundation of the argument, we seem to argue rather *a posteriori*, from the effects to the cause ; but, be this as it will, when we proceed farther, to a proof of Supreme *Intelligence* or *Wisdom*, it is, on all hands, acknowledged, that we can prove it only *a posteriori*, from our ideas or experience of *intelligence* in ourselves : The Supreme *power* of the first cause is also best proved from its effects : and, in like manner, all his moral perfections, his justice, goodness, &c. are proved from any degrees or resemblances of them that are found in his creatures, and his display of these to them in the way of his *Providence*.

Wherein then, you will say, lies the proof *a priori* with respect to *Providence*? In this plain connection.—

From

From any degrees, resemblances, or effects, as just now mentioned, of God's moral perfections, his justice and goodness, as well as of his natural perfections of power and wisdom, which we find in ourselves and around us, we conclude, that they must be in the highest degree in him. So far we argue *a posteriori* from the effects to the cause; but, the nature of this cause being thus far investigated, we may in all other cases very safely and consistently argue *a priori* from his nature and perfections, his omnipresence and omniscience, and conclude, particularly in this case, as to his governing all things by his providence, that we must believe it as firmly and unavoidably, as we do his natural and moral perfections; for that we cannot conceive of them as taking place, without supposing them to be exercised; and the ends for which they are so, can only be what were mentioned, namely, the communicating such degrees of happiness and perfection to his creatures, as are suited to their different natures and capacities; nor is this arguing in a circle any more than in the other instances mentioned, where we reason from the nature of causes and their influence, in cases that are known, to such as are unknown or unexperienced: Were we to prove, that God is intelligent because man is so, and again,

gain, man's intelligence from God's, this indeed would be a circle: But we prove man's intelligence from his experience or feelings, from that we argue as to the Supreme intelligence, and, on establishing this, we suppose its exercise extended to all its other effects, whether known to us or unknown.

2d, The other arguments from *reason* to prove a providence, are plainly *a posteriori*, taken from what we see of its operations or effects; particularly every appearance of order and regularity in the natural world, such as in the returns of the seasons and their effects on the vegetable world, the succession of day and night, the proportions betwixt births and deaths, males and females, the operations of instinct in irrational animals, and their being suited to their different elements and offices; all which particulars would bear great enlargement, and are a very proper subject of contemplation * for giving an habitual impression of God's presence and government in the way of his providence, and leading us reverently to adore it.

3d, MIRACLES have been sometimes mentioned, as an argument for providence; were they to happen often, it might rather

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* In arguing as to an over-ruling providence, the appearance of order in any one instance proves intelligence, but its not appearing in a thousand instances, does not prove the contrary, because it may and must be ascribed to our ignorance.

be said, that they would weaken the belief of it, but by their happening sometimes, the seldom, this belief is established, and still more so by PROPHETIES, or predictions of future events, long before the visible causes are known to exist, or at least to operate. This, even in a few instances, evidently proves their being under the direction of Supreme Ruler or Governour, to who all events are known from the beginning. But

4th. When we consult SCRIPTURE there is no room left for the smallest doubt with respect to *providence*: The whole tendency of scripture tends to establish our belief of it, not in a cold and general way, but so as to render our belief of it steady, lively, habitual and practical, and confirmed by frequent reflection, reliance, acquiescence and submission to it; acknowledging, "The kingdom is the Lord's, and that he is the governour among the nations; that there is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel but from him;" Declarations to this purpose, we have in the Old as well as New Testament; but it is remarkable, that there are more complaints of the justice of providence in the Old Testament than in the New, and that the complaint, chiefly given in consequence of them, is a view of the end of the wicked, or judgment awaiting them, either in this life or the next.

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But in the New Testament, we are taught to take comfort, in the view of dark or adverse dispensations of providence, from the hopes of their working for our good, particularly in a spiritual sense, *i. e.* in what respects the improvement of our souls; so that sufferings are no more to be called evil than the fire by which metals are refined: We are likewise taught in the New Testament to take comfort from the vast disproportion between those temporal sufferings, and the eternal blessedness to which they are conducive. These considerations lead us to observe, that

SECONDLY, As we have sufficient authority both from scripture and reason to believe a providence, *i. e.* a supreme intelligence presiding over the interests and concerns of mankind; we are also warranted to believe in the *wisdom* and *goodness* of God's providential administration, that he has always the best ends in view, even the happiness and improvement of his creatures, and that he uses the most effectual means for promoting these, however much we may be often in the dark with respect to them, as not seeing their tendency and manner of operation for these ends, or thinking their attainment long delayed*.

Without

* If wisdom and goodness, justice and power, be displayed in some of the operations and government of providence, it proves the reality of it; nor is it a sufficient objection against this, that more of these is not displayed, unless we were to suppose God obliged at all times to act up to the utmost extent of these perfections, in a way manifest to us.

Without this persuasion, of the wisdom and goodness of providence, little comfort would arise from the contemplation or belief of it; but of this also we may easily be satisfied, from innumerable testimonies with respect to it in scripture, asserting, " That " by wisdom God has founded the earth, " and that it is full of his goodness :" As also, from as much as we can trace or discern of the divine administration, even with respect to the things of this life, in which it appears, that " He is good to all, and " his tender mercies are over all his works;" and, if this appears from any part of the ways of his providence of which we have a clearer view, we may, by analogy, conclude the same as to other parts of his administration that are concealed from us. Nor can we indeed easily conceive any other ends which a Being of infinite perfection and happiness could have, in making and ruling his creatures, but to display and communicate perfection and happiness to them, according to their different natures, conditions, and subserviency to one another.

Thus much as to our belief of intelligence, wisdom, and goodness, in the administration of providence; but what shall be said of *justice*? Of this also we see evidences enough to establish our belief of it, and in many cases, where this is not so obvious at first

first view, we may (as shall be observed when we come to answer objections,) afterwards, upon a narrower examination and knowledge of the ways of providence, be made to see and acknowledge a display of justice where we had formerly complained of the want of it ; but it must also be added, that as God's wisdom and goodness in the operations of providence cannot be accounted for in this state, without connecting it with another to succeed, in which these perfections shall have their full effect and issue : This is still more observable with respect to his *justice*; and, though there are proofs enough of it, to put it beyond doubt, yet, there are also such appearances of inequality in his distributions at present, as lay a foundation for one of the strongest arguments we have in proof of a future state of being, in which there shall be such a display and exercise of *justice*, as will make God's different regards for the righteous and wicked manifest to the rational world. The same may be said of God's infinite *purity* and *holiness*, i. e. his hatred of all sin or moral evil and unrighteousness, a divine attribute so little mentioned by the wisest heathens, that they all allow many impurities to be ascribed even to those whom they considered as their Deities : But as there is none of the divine perfections more fully

asserted and displayed, or whose resemblance is more recommended in the christian revelation, than this of holiness, and yet much opposition to it given and tolerated in the present state, the same argument may be drawn from this, as from the consideration of God's justice, formerly mentioned, in proof of another state to succeed, in which his holiness as well as justice shall appear to have its full effect.

There remains only the consideration of God's power, how far this is exercised and evidenced in the government of his providence, *i. e.* how far his other adorable perfections, now mentioned, are supported by infinite power; and of this there is less room for any doubt than in the other cases formerly mentioned. Even that part of the natural world that falls under our notice, affords awful demonstrations of his power, enough to prove it superior to all that can oppose it, and thereby to make it a proper object of our supreme trust and confidence. Such a superiority appears to all other power, or such an extent of power as is sufficient to account for all the phenomena and effects that fall under our notice, for this is all that we can reason from: So that there will, no doubt, still remain a question, Whether this power be delegated or derived to any inferior agent, presiding over the present

sent system of things ; or if there is an immediate interposition and exercise of supreme power for this purpose ? This question shall be taken notice of afterwards ; it is enough at present to observe, in general, that the latter is every way the most rational and scriptural supposition. By supreme or infinite power all things can be done with equal ease, mediately or immediately; there is no distinction, as in the case of subordinate or limited power, from any thing's being more or less difficult or distant. So that we may, at all times, consider ourselves and our interests as under the immediate notice and direction of the Supreme Ruler of the world, by whom the heavenly bodies continue or move in their orbs, and without whom one hair of our heads cannot fall to the ground : To whom we have also reason to believe, that, of all his visible creatures **MAN** is the peculiar object of his care, as, of them all; he only is made capable of any acquaintance and intercourse with or reliance on himself; and it is this consideration, of men's superior capacity, in the way of acquaintance with and reliance on God, and his particular attention to their interests; it is this consideration (I say) that renders man's present condition (however seemingly indigent, infirm, and helpless,) preferable to that of any other creatures he sees around him.

In a narrow and partial view of human life, it may indeed be said, that there is no creature, we are acquainted with, more weak and helpless in himself than **MAN**; tho' his natural desires and necessities be so great, yet that his natural abilities do not appear to correspond with them; so that there is no creature we know less able to do for himself without the assistance of others: This is often a very great subject of complaint, but it is so only in a confined view of man's condition, or, when only his animal state is considered; for if we extend our view to his spiritual or intellectual state, we shall find less cause of complaint on this head; besides, that his original or infant weakness makes a limited intelligent being, like man, a more proper subject of trial and improvement; (for if man was not first an infant he could not be so easily trained,) besides this consideration, I say, we may observe that the powers of understanding and reflection which are given us, and which direct us to look for help and safety, to an over-ruling Being, infinitely wise, powerful, and merciful; these are able to compensate every outward disadvantage; and, if to these we add the supernatural discoveries he has made of himself to us, particularly in the christian revelation, and the evidence there given of his tender concern for our present and future

ture interests ; if all this be taken into the account, we may say, that there is no creature, we are conversant with, that has shared more liberally in God's favour and good will than man, nor any who has a surer, a nobler, and happier resource, amidst every disadvantage or distress to which his present condition makes him liable. The very angels in heaven, happy and glorious as they are, in beholding and ministering to the most High, have their entire dependence on God, and can have no higher help than this, which is the ultimate resource of man; with this difference, indeed, as to him, that the imperfection and corruption of his present condition places this help and resource seemingly at a greater distance ; insomuch as his views of God must thereby be darker, and his intercourse with him more difficult; from which many fears and discouragements must arise, giving him occasion for the exercise of trust in God, as well as engaging him to look forward to a state of higher perfection and felicity, and to have his faith and hope exercised with a view to it : For

THIRDLY, As we have sufficient authority for believing God's particular attention to the circumstances and concerns of men in the way of his providence, and that his natural and moral perfections, in the

manner now mentioned, are regularly and uniformly exercised in carrying on such ends as are most consistent with, or conducive to the highest interests of mankind in *general*; so likewise, we are warranted to believe that we ourselves, each of us in *particular*, are not excluded, by any thing in our external circumstances or condition, be they ever so mean, and seemingly inconsiderable, from the hopes of sharing in the beneficial effects of his providence, as operating for our good in the issue, whatever may be its aspect or appearance with respect to us at present.

Without some persuasion of this, of God's attention to each of us in *particular*, very little advantage would arise, either in the way of restraint or of comfort, from the belief of a general providence, extending only to some events and operations of more general consequence, or a partial providence extending only to particular characters and denominations of men.

Every argument we mentioned for proving a providence, may be said to stand against these erroneous opinions with respect to it, as every argument against the continual interposition of the Deity in all instances, may stand against his interposition in any one instance, since the original establishment of things. We shall afterwards

see, that any apprehension of some things being too minute and trivial, or incon siderable, for the care of providence, arises from a wrong judgment of what is most perfective of it, or dishonouring to it; it is enough to observe here, that, from all the arguments formerly mentioned, it appears, that none are excluded from the common care of providence; and that, as it regulates and conducts all for the general good, we may be assured, each of us individually, that our highest good shall, in the issue, be thereby promoted and secured, if there be no obstruction to it on our own part by unbelief, distrust, disobedience, and resistance to the will of the Most High: It would be most dishonouring to him, and a direct contradiction to what was said of his perfections, to suppose, that the good of the whole, as pursued by him, should not always be entirely consistent with, or rather necessarily imply the good and happiness of all who (tho' conscious of their own unworthiness and inability) have the same great end at heart, and who endeavour, both in the way of service and suffering, to have their wills ever conformed to his. A firm persuasion, therefore, that all the operations of God's providence are thus favourable to our highest interests, will reconcile us to them, even when apparently against us; it will make us take

take every thing in good part from him, as a child would do from a parent, whose tenderness and affection, as well as superior wisdom, ability, and attention to his interests, he was fully convinced of.

But, as it is acknowledged, that the operations of providence may, at present, seem adverse and severe, even when finally conducive to our highest interests; in order to support us amidst this darkness and intricacy, it may be added, that,

Fourthly, We are also warranted to believe, that however much we may at present be often in the dark, with respect to the ways of providence, even when operating finally for our good, yet, in some future period of our existence, they shall be *unfolded* to us, and we shall be made to see the wisdom and goodness of the divine administration as to ourselves, and others with whom we are connected; and that even in those cases which were to us formerly dark and perplexed.

The difficulty of accounting for many of the ways of providence in the present state, is one argument to prove the certainty of a future state, a state in which the human capacity shall be enlarged, so as to comprehend much more of God's nature and ways. Nor is there any doubt but that one part of the happiness of good men in this future state

state will arise (as shall be set forth in our concluding dissertation with respect to it) from their receiving, in this manner, clearer views of God's goodness, even in those providential dispensations with respect to them, which seemed formerly mysterious or adverse. Will not the assurance of this, therefore, be enough to reconcile you to them at present? If your physician should give you any medicine, that was disagreeable to you at first, and tell you that, tho' he was not to explain to you the manner of its operation, yet, in a short time, you would know it, and feel the good effects of it: Would you not very readily take it on his word? If a parent or teacher ever prescribed to you a task, which you thought unnecessary at the time, and told you that you would see more the necessity of it some time hence; did you not also take their word for it? Does not therefore, your heavenly Physician, your heavenly Parent and Teacher, deserve still more credit from you, and acquiescence in his will, even when you know not at present the particular ends he has in view?

Ignorant however, as we are of the ends of many of God's providential dispensations, or their manner of operating, in an outward way for our benefit; yet if we consider them as they have relation to our SOULS, and are made subservient to their interests
and

and improvement, we shall see another channel, of much greater consequence, in which they operate for our benefit, and manifest the Divine wisdom and goodness in numberless cases that are dark and intricate to us at present, but in which a persuasion that they shall operate in the issue for the benefit and improvement of our Souls, would be one of the best sources of comfort under them, and one of the best means of reconciling us to them.

For leading us, therefore, to this persuasion, we need only consider the evidences we have of God's tender and compassionate regard for our souls: There is nothing indeed of which we have clearer evidence than this; the spirituality of their nature, and their original resemblance of himself, give us reason to believe it, as every creature of God's must be more or less the object of his love, according to the degree of this resemblance: Nor would it be an honouring of God in our thoughts to imagine, that what proceeds from himself, and partakes in some measure of his nature, should be originally the object of his hatred: No creature of his can be so, unless so far as it has voluntarily departed from the law of its creation, or fallen from its original condition.

Such a voluntary departure from God's law, is what we call *Sin*, which is the only evil

evil that can render any creature of God's hateful to him: But as this evil is introduced, as the soul is corrupted by sin, and has departed from God, what further hopes can there be of an interest in his love and goodness? Had he not revealed it to us himself, we should here indeed have been at a loss to know how his love could be further manifested; but, from the revelation he has made us of his will, by his Son appearing and suffering in our nature, he has clearly shewn to us the way in which there is room left for a display, not only of his goodness to us as *men*, but likewise of his mercy to us as *Sinners*.

The *goodness* of God may be said to have respect even to the most perfect and innocent of his rational creatures, but his *mercy* only to such of them as are fallen and sinful, who deserve nothing from him, and are unable to recover themselves or give any satisfaction for their offences against him; these, unless the seeds of goodness in them be entirely extinguished, are the peculiar objects of his mercy, which is exercised in the way of pardoning, redeeming, reclaiming and renewing them, in the manner, and upon the grounds set forth to us in the revelation now mentioned; and the consideration of this, of the provision God has made for the recovery and salvation of our souls,

for

for restoring and securing their eternal happiness, together with the comfortable hopes of attaining it, may reconcile us to the various trials and distresses of the present life, from whatever quarter they come, whether from the hand of man, or from the more immediate hand of God.

Shall the ambitious man take comfort in all his toils, from the view of favour or power among men? Shall the man, whose heart is set on wealth and riches, take comfort from the acquisition or possession of these, even under all the contempt he can meet with? And will not you comfort yourself, amidst other distresses or disappointments, in what respects your outward condition, by considering that your eternal hopes are secured, that your most valuable treasure is safely laid up? You may be poor in this world, and yet rich towards God. You may lose your friends and many comforts you once enjoyed or expected, but, be comforted, if you have reasonable grounds to expect something higher and more durable. Your body may be feeble and languishing, yet let it not discourage you, when, even through this, you see the more of God's love and affection for your soul; when its recovery and health are provided for.

For

For what we would have particularly to be observed or attended to here is, that the severest dispensations of God's providence to us, in the present life, are often the means by which he carries on the purposes of his grace or favour with respect to our souls, in order to that life which is eternal. It would be of unspeakable consequence to us, in point of comfort and happiness, to have the firm belief of God's providential goodness in this way of making our crosses our blessings, and the diseases of the body, medicine for the soul: There is nothing more certain, than that this is the case, however difficult it often is for us to believe it, even as it is often difficult to make a child believe, when he is corrected by his parent, that it is done in love and for his good.

For leading us to the firm belief of this, we must look forward to what awaits the soul *hereafter*, and rest satisfied that, by this, God's love will be fully made manifest, that, by what awaits the soul hereafter, he will abundantly make up for the greatest outward disadvantages at present: No consideration can be more necessary and comfortable than this; for, if we were to judge of his love and regard to us, merely from the outward evidence of it here, they might often be questioned; but he has not confined our views to so narrow a compass; and, if those whom he favours do, at any time seem to be

forgot, or frowned on by him here, it is only that he may acknowledge them the more eminently hereafter, when they shall see the full effects and progress of his providential goodness, with respect to them.

Thus we see the sum or amount of what we are warranted, both by reason and revelation, to believe with respect to *Providence*: But before we proceed to consider the objections against it, there are two or three short observations fit to be made, with a view to some more practical benefit from what we have been considering.

1. If nothing can befall you but by the appointment of Providence, then lay aside all unnecessary anxiety about futurity; your fears are vain, your immoderate cares are unavailing. You have something important, you'll say, at stake, which will at such a particular time be determined, and can you avoid being anxious about it? But what will this better you, when you have once used every mean in your power, if it is a matter independent of you; can you direct or arrest the hand of Providence in its decisions? Or, perhaps, you have some imaginary danger before you, and you'll think you have reason to be alarmed with it: But will your fears or alarms alter the course of Providence? instead of their lessening your danger, is it not rather likely that they will magnify it, and disable you,

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the more to evade it ; instead of averting the uncertain evil you fear, may it not possibly rather misrepresent it, and make a real evil of that which otherwise you would perhaps never have felt ; anticipating the sufferings of to-morrow, as if those of to-day were not enough for you.

It is not therefore your outward cares, your fears, your dangers that should draw your chief attention, if you have the firm belief of the doctrine we have been considering, but the ends fit to be pursued, means to be used, and duties to be performed on your part; leaving events entirely in the hand of Providence.

2. If nothing can befall you but by the appointment of Providence, then learn to look above the hand of man in whatever befalls you, and in whatever awaits you, whether prosperous or adverse.

Some Jewish writers have a conceit with respect to the Patriarch Joseph, that his enlargement from prison in Egypt was deferred by Providence, for two years longer than otherways it would have been, because he had too great a reliance on Pharaoh's butler, without looking further : Be this as it will, your safety and deliverance will be best secured, by looking above all second causes, as the objects of your reliance, or of your displeasure, but consider them as instruments in the hand of God, for ac-

complishing the purposes of his Providence with respect to you, and that to this al-wise over-ruling hand, it is your happiness, as well as duty, in all circumstances, most chearfully to submit*.

Lastly, If the schemes of Providence are not closed or compleated in the present state, then be not hasty to determine as to their wisdom and goodness, in whatever has respect to yourself or others, from any thing you can here discover : You would think the man very rash or ignorant, whom you observed to be prejudiced against a picture, or statue, before he saw any more than the first outlines, or rude draught of it, or against a building, when he saw only the materials loosely collected, before they were properly disposed, or put together : Be not you therefore over-hasty in judging as to the operations of Providence, until the whole scheme is finished, compleated, and unfolded ; it is then, that its harmony and beauty shall become conspicuous to the whole of God's intelligent creation.

After having considered what it is that we are, upon the surest grounds, both of Scripture and reason, warranted to believe with

* Submission to the will of God (which none can throw off) is very different from that submission here spoken of ; we are to submit, not from necessity but choice, not because we must, but because we ought to do it : The exercise of such submission cannot be kept up in long continued distress without some degree of chearfulness founded on faith, and cherisched by hope towards God.

With respect to Providence, it now remains,

II. That we take some notice of the difficulties that appear here, the questions or *objections* by which some have unhappily laboured to weaken the belief of a doctrine that affords such unspeakable satisfaction to every wise and good mind. The

1st Difficulty we shall mention, that occurs with respect to the doctrine of Providence, is to reconcile this to *free agency* in man; as if it should be said, " If God " works all by his Providence, extending " even to human actions, what is left for " man to work ? If God over-rules all, " what liberty of acting has any being un- " der his government ?" I answer, just as much as is fit for him to have, and more than many make a right use of ; just as much as renders us accountable for the way in which our powers of action are employed, and justifies the dictates of Conscience in approving or condemning us. The feelings of our own minds are so clear and undeniable as to this, that we can no more doubt of it than of our own existence, or any of our sensible perceptions ; and, to say that these feelings are delusive, would lay a foundation for universal scepticism.

" But still, you'll insist, the difficulty " remains of reconciling my freedom in " acting to God's Providence over-ruling " me in it ; if I am accountable for my

“ actions, must they not be free? if they
“ be free, Are they not contingent? and if
“ they are contingent, How can they be
“ said to be over-ruled by Providence?
“ Does not this carry in it the absurdity
“ of supposing them free and necessary at
“ the same time?”

This is the objection in its full force, and yet, did the imperfection of our ideas at present admit of our seeing through it, we would probably find it as frivolous as what was sometimes used in the old scholastic disputes to prove the impossibility of motion; because, said they, no body could move but either where it was, or where it was not; both which were absurd, or, as others would have it, because there was an universal plenum: We are now come to see so far through these objections as to pronounce them ridiculous; and, when we come to know more of the nature and essential constitution of our mental faculties, we shall also understand how their operations can be foreseen and over-ruled by the supreme Being, without their being necessitated, or their freedom encroached on; for, that these two do, in fact, take place, and are, therefore, reconcileable to one another, is as certain as the existence of motion, or the plainest maxim in philosophy.

That the foreseeing and over-ruling human actions is the prerogative of the supreme

preme Being alone, and incompetent to any other, we shall afterwards see reason for believing : But, the objection from free agency to *his* having this *prerogative* will be found to stand equally against every other hypothesis that can be named ; for, suppose only his prescience to extend to human actions, but no over-ruling influence or appointment, besides the objection from supposing the prescience of an event not determined, may it not also be objected, How can any action be foreseen without being certain, and, if it must certainly be done, how is it free ? Nay even, though the divine prescience as well as influence was supposed out of the question, does not the same difficulty remain of the action's being certain from eternity ? If we suppose that this previous certainty of it prevents its being free, because it prevents its being casual or contingent. If, indeed, this certainty depends upon the influence or operation of any external physical causes, it destroys liberty ; but, if it depends only upon the motions of the will in an intelligent being, which must always be supposed influenced by motives, and that these motives are internal and rational, not external and compulsory, there is all the idea of liberty necessary to make the agent accountable, let the previous certainty, foreknowledge, or appointment of the action be as it will :

Thus

Thus, if the sun shall rise or shine to-morrow, its doing so is certain to day, and was certain from eternity, but, as the certainty of its rising or shining depends on physical causes, on fixed invariable laws, from which it cannot depart, it cannot be said to act freely, or indeed to act at all, but to be acted upon; the certainty of the event, with respect to it, implies necessity, but, with respect to a superior agent, who has these laws at command, it is entirely consistent with liberty; whatever internal motive he may have in acting, it implies no necessity, unless we call it by a name that seems improper, though not uncommon; *viz.* A moral necessity arising from the influence that internal, moral, or rational motives have upon the will of an intelligent Being; if this be called necessity, it is, I may say, a free necessity, *i. e.* consistent with the most perfect freedom, nay there cannot be true freedom without it, *i. e.* not that freedom which is consistent with intelligence; there can only be casualty.

If the influence of rational motives destroys freedom, none but idiots or madmen can be called free; for, to determine intelligent beings, there must be a regard supposed to such motives; else it destroys their intelligence, which would be constituting freedom at too great an expence; with such beings, the

the essence of liberty seems very much to lie in the power of attending more or less to these motives for acting one way rather than another ; in this attention they are perfectly free, and their determination in consequence of this being a self-determination is the true idea of liberty, which is not destroyed even by outward restraint, if a consciousness of this self-determination or election takes place : Thus a man is free in staying at home all day, if it is his own choice, though, by his gate's being locked, unknown to him, he should not have it in his power to go out. A power of surmounting all opposition is not necessary to liberty, but an inward voluntary determination of the power we have, else none but the supreme Being could be free ; a power of acting contrarywise is not necessary to liberty, else a man would not be at liberty to walk, because he could not fly : Indifference as to motives is not necessary to liberty, but that the motives be internal or addressed to the *will* ; nor does even the most invariable regard of the will to these inward moral motives destroy freedom, else beings of superior perfection would not be free ; the more perfect any being is, this regard to moral motives is the more inviolable ; it is from this that freedom has its highest perfection or fitness for promoting the

the ultimate end of all, even the supreme good. But those who consider freedom as destroyed or diminished by the influence of internal motives on the will, know not where to stop in tracing this influence; for, laying aside all regard to that of the supreme Being upon it, they bring in the agent himself as destroying it, if his will be determined, as it ought to be, by the last judgment of his understanding.

Upon the whole, to me it seems plain, that moral liberty, or freedom of action is not at all destroyed either by previous certainty, by previous knowledge, and appointment, or by the influence of internal rational motives, if there is a power of attending to these, and if the will be free in such attention, and self-determination take place in consequence of it; so that it would, perhaps, be a less ambiguous way of speaking, here to say, that we are free in willing, rather than in acting, and, instead of calling any action free or not free, to call it voluntary or involuntary.

If therefore man's liberty, and consequently, his accountableness for his actions, be thus reconcileable to the influence of internal motives on his will, God's prescience may easily be admitted, as he knows perfectly the extent of this influence in every particular case; and likeways his Providence

dence may be admitted, in the way of operating, through the influence of these motives, on the human will, without destroying liberty. One man can go some length in the way of influencing the will of another, by the motives he presents or suggests, and of foreseeing how he may act in consequence of this, without encroaching on his liberty : Superior spirits may go a greater length in this way, though (from the ignorance of Satan in the case of Job, and of our Saviour's temptations, and from some other hints in Scripture as to the imperfection of angelic knowledge) it is not likely that any of them can determine, with infallible foresight, as to the future voluntary or free actions of men : But that the supreme Being, who appoints and who knows perfectly our various circumstances, dispositions, powers, and principles of action, that he should have this prerogative of foreseeing and influencing or over-ruling, even those actions that appear most contingent, without such a force upon the will as would destroy liberty, moral agency, and accountableness for our actions, is highly consistent with our ideas of the extent of his knowledge and perfection of his government ; and,

If it is asked, How his Providence thus extends to sinful actions ? it may be answered, upon the above principles, that it **extends**

extends to them in the way of prescience, permission, and over-ruling them for the greatest general good, without destroying the idea of freedom, accountableness ; and those feelings of conscience in the agent which indicate such accountableness, as he also secretly animates, supports, and communicates spiritual aid in duty, without superseding our endeavours, or doing violence to our mental faculties. It would indeed be almost a denying of his Providence entirely, to deny it the influence now mentioned ; as the principal object or spring of its operations, in regulating the affairs of mankind, seems to ly in working on the hearts and minds of men ; but, neither God's influencing them, in the manner formerly mentioned, nor his supporting them in the use of their faculties, makes him chargeable with their sins, or abuse of these faculties : He cannot be reckoned the author of sin, though his Providence supplies us with what becomes the occasion of sin ; he is not chargeable with man's abuse of himself and others by immoderate drinking, though he furnishes him wine, and has given it the virtue of either refreshing or inebriating, according to the discretion and judgment with which it is used.

Thus, in all other instances, may the purity and holiness of God be vindicated, amidst

amidst all the impurity and corruption that prevails under the government of his providence: As the sun in the firmament, not only illuminates the more beautiful parts of nature, but shines also, with all its brightness, on the seats of filth and corruption, without being itself thereby contaminated or defiled, thus the influence and dominion of providence extend not only to the virtuous, but likewise to the sinful and corrupt pursuits of men, while it continues infinitely pure, immaculate, and untainted; nay it extends to them often even in the way of restraining from much sin, else this world would almost be a hell. But if it shall be asked, Why does he not restrain from more? We may as well ask, Why does he not give heaven upon earth? Why does he not appear to us, at all times, to act up to the utmost of his perfections? But,

2dly, There is another objection to providence, so nearly connected with that which we have now been considering, that it admits of the same solution, " If, (will some say) God over-rules all events by his providence, For what purpose shall I *labour*? " The appointments of providence must take place, Why then should I *pray*? I can neither inform God of any thing he knew not before, nor expect he should

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“ break through the order of his providence at my request ?”

The answer to all this is, that the supposition of a providence, is rather what encourages labour and prayer ; he who overrules all things by his providence, has connected our use of proper means with the communication of his blessings to us ; they are inseparable from one another ; he could have framed us so, and ordered our condition here in such a manner, as not to need such constant supplies and repairs, not to need any labour on our part, for obtaining them, nor any application to him for influencing our labours, and making them successful : But, with a view to our improvement, and nearer admission to himself, he saw two things necessary for us, *namely*, labour or exercise, and dependence on him for its continuance and success. The trial to be taken of us here, made it necessary, that the powers given us should be exercised, that they should not ly idle and torpid ; the improvement required for immortality, makes labour necessary with all these habits of patience, fortitude, submission, trust, hope, &c. that are acquired by it, *i. e.* by the unseen influence of providence upon it, connecting this labour or exercise on our part, with the improvement or benefit arising from it, so as, with every new effort,

to

to receive new strength and success, in a way that is certain and effectual, yet does no violence to our natural faculties.

To say then, that God's over-ruling all by his providence, implies his supplying, supporting, and relieving us, without regard to our use of means, would be representing his providence in a light not at all suited to the nature of our present state, which is so ordered, as that we may take it for granted, that, without the use of means, the interposition of providence is not to be expected ; it may indeed, in a way of sovereign goodness, be vouchsafed without this, but we cannot warrantably look for it without the use of means, if in our power ; and further, even when they are in our power, and when used, he has seen it necessary, for retaining us in our duty and dependence, that we should be engaged to apply to him, and to trust * in him for giving efficacy to these means, or making our labours prosperous ; and, though we cannot inform God of any thing he knew not before, nor move him to counteract the appointments of his providence, yet, besides his precepts to this purpose, enjoining us to pray to him, and thereby testify the sense we have of our necessities

* A proper trust in providence, does not hinder from the use of means, but from the use of unwarrantable means, on which it would be presumptuous in us to expect a blessing.

cessities, by making known our requests; besides this, I say, he has, by his method of dispensing his benefits, given undeniable evidence, that the operations of his providence are accommodated to the requests, and made subservient to the interests of those who humbly implore his aid, and thereby testify their entire confidence in him; by the frequent acting and expressing of which, in the way of prayer and every act of duty and devotion, that habit of steady reliance, dependence, and trust in God, which is so highly suitable to us, and agreeable to him, comes to be firmly established. A

3d *Objection* brought against providence, or rather a limitation of it, is, that it cannot be supposed to descend to objects or actions, that are very *minute* and *trivial*; that this would be below the dignity of the supreme Governour. " We acknowledge (I " have heard some say) his providential go- " vernment, so far as to believe, that he has " established certain general laws, and that " they are suited to the different orders of " his creatures, but, these being once esta- " blished, is it not more consistent with the " honour of his government to suppose, " that he allows these laws to have their " course, or natural effect, without any " further interposition or attention to e- " very minute particular that occurs, in the
" way

" way of obedience to, or deviation from
" them ? or, if there be such a particular
" interposition and attention, is it not more
" consistent with the ideas of his honour
" and dignity now mentioned, to suppose,
" that he has devolved this particular care
" and attention on certain subordinate in-
" visible agents, commissioned or empower-
" ed by him to preside over those different
" orders of beings mentioned, according to
" the different provinces assigned them,
" and acting in conformity to the general
" laws he has established?"

The following observations will, I hope, suffice in answer to all this.

First, It might be enough to say, that God's immediate interposition by his providence, even in such cases as we reckon minute and inconsiderable, being so fully and positively asserted in Scripture, as what in fact takes place, and the same being likewise proved by reason, under the preceding head, all objections, arising from our ideas of what is more or less consistent with his honour or dignity, as supreme governor, must be supposed vain and ill grounded; they cannot destroy the truth of a fact that appears certain and established; so that we must take it for granted, that the inconsistency or mistake lies in our ideas or notions of the divine honour and dignity, for these are what are here pleaded, as

standing against a particular providence, and not any want of knowledge and power for governing, more than for creating. We may therefore observe,

Secondly, That the distinctions of more or less difficult, more or less important and honourable, cannot be supposed the same in the eye of the Supreme Being as in that of man ; all effects are equally easy to infinite power, all events equally manifest to infinite wisdom*. It is judging of him according to the measure of human strength, skill, or constancy, to suppose that a multiplicity of objects, be they great or small, can weary him, or any disagreeable occurrences discompose him. We admit that it was no impeachment of his honour, no diminution of his dignity, to create the meanest insects, we must therefore admit the same as to his preserving and governing them : None denies his presence with them all, and if this implies no stain, no meanness, neither does his providence over them.

There are two considerations, which, if properly attended to here, would silence all such frivolous objections against a particular providence.

The

- He sees, with equal eye, as God of all ;
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall ;
Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.

Essay on Mess.

The one is, that though it is certain, that God's care and attention extends to his creatures, according as the elevation or importance of their state requires ; yet this elevation or importance, which any orders or individuals of them seem to have above others, is entirely his free gift ; so that, in his eye, none of them will be considered as contemptible ; their sphere, rank, or station, amidst the immensity of his works, is precisely what he appointed.

The other consideration is, that the minutest events and effects, the most inconsiderable or contemptible beings in our eye, may have uses, or answer ends unknown to us, which give them sufficient importance in the view of the Supreme Governor ; and the many instances there have been, even in human experience, of great effects from causes seemingly inconsiderable, may suffice to silence us in our judgment with respect to them.

But further, *Thirdly*, In answer to the objection we are now considering, As we readily admit the divine immediate agency in regulating the various motions in the material planetary system, and even in that part of the human bodily system which is material and has no dependence on the human will, *viz.* the vital functions, without exception of any parts, motions, or functions, as if they were excluded from his

his superintendence, (or from the influence of those natural laws* to which he has made them subject, and by which he conducts each of them,) because of their being too minute and inconsiderable ; why should we think that any of the operations of beings endued with life, or even such as depend upon the free will of moral agents, should be too inconsiderable to be regarded and regulated by him ? And why may we not suppose that, as in his works of nature, so also in his works of providence, he has established certain laws or methods of proceeding, not discoverable by us at present, nor encroaching on man's natural liberty, but, agreeably to which, certain measures of conduct are uniformly and invariably connected with certain consequences as to happiness or misery, either here or hereafter, as naturally as vapours ascend, or stones fall downwards.

Fourthly, Though the supposition of subordinate agents or delegates, to whom God may have committed his providential administration, assigning to each of them their different provinces, although this supposition cannot be said to derogate from the perfection

* By the course of nature, or any law of nature, can only be meant, the uniform way in which the Author of Nature operates, in and by every being, according to the various natures and principles he has given them, and the ends for which he made and preserves them.

perfection of his nature and government, yet as little does it add thereto, and, instead of having any foundation in Scripture, there are rather many intimations therein given, of God's immediate interposition and attention to the minutest events or effects; which, as we have already shown, may not only be supposed, without any diminution of his dignity, quiet, or happiness, but must necessarily be inferred from his being always intimately present, in the exercise of all his perfections, thro' every part of his works, which supersedes the use of such inferior agents; but that, according to their several natures, capacities and offices, he should employ them in executing his commands, and make them subservient to the great ends of his providential administration, is highly consistent with his infinite wisdom and majesty. By this it will easily be seen that we do not at all mean any such thing as an *anima mundi** an unintelligent *Plastick principle*

* The *mundane soul* of Plato, the *plastick*, unintelligent, all-pervading principle of Aristotle, Cudworth, &c. the *numbers* of Pythagoras, the *atoms* of Democritus, the *vortexes* of Descartes, the *archæus* of Paracelsus, the *occult qualities* of some Newtonians, and the *heavenly agents* of the Hutchinsonians, are so many different ways of accounting for the operations of nature and providence, without the immediate interposition of the Deity. But whoever examines their hypothesis, will find them to be but words without ideas; and whoever embraces them and is satisfied with the light they give, as increasing his stock of knowledge, will find himself as much disappointed as Ixion in the fable, when expecting to embrace *Juno*, he found he had only grasped a *cloud*.

principle, or the like ; these are words without ideas, conceits without any reason or experiment to support them,

IV. It is sometimes objected against providence " That many things in the natural " world seem *useless*, or rather *hurtful* to " man, the principal inhabitant of this " earth, as vast deserts, seas, mountains, " &c. and that there are sometimes *calamitous* operations or phenomena in a pre- " ternatural way, as earthquakes, pestilences, &c. so that these objects and events " appear rather *fortuitous*, or, as it were, " the sport of nature, than the effect of " supreme intelligence, presiding over and " directing them."

This objection is also founded on the same mistake of supposing that we are able to judge of the operations of infinite wisdom : It would, I may say, be an argument against God's over-ruling all things by his providence, if his ways and ends in it were always manifest to us, and the concealment of them answers one great end which he has in view, *viz.* the trial of our faith, patience, trust, and submission to his will, even in cases that to us appear dark or adverse : Did we clearly see them not to be adverse, where would be the trial by them ? or did we clearly see in them, judgment irrevocable, it behoved to throw us into despair.

It might however be a mean of silencing us, in our judgment of any of his works as useless, that many of them, which were long considered as being so, or at least, whose uses were long unknown, came to be found of great usefulness for the accommodation of life; such as the vast tracts of sea, now made subservient to the purposes of commerce and mutual intercourse of nations; from which also vapours are exhaled by the solar heat, and formed into clouds that are driven by the winds, and rained down afterward upon the earth in fructifying showers. Again, the vast ridges of mountains complained of, are found to have their usefulness in collecting the vapours we just now mentioned, forming reservoirs of water, that burst out in springs and rivers, and affording shelter to the countries adjacent to them. Tempests have their use, for purifying the air, and so of other natural or preternatural phenomena, which have their usefulness, in different ways, either of mercy or of judgment, with respect to man.

If it be asked, Why is all this apparatus necessary for man, for his health, shelter, intercourse, comfort or chastisement? Why is man so constituted as to need all this? It may as well be asked, Why was he made a man? Why not an angel? Why was he made to walk? Why not to fly? All this must

must be resolved into the depths of divine wisdom. From the discoveries that have been made of valuable ends, answered by many objects formerly thought useless, we may learn to pronounce none to be of them, merely because we are, as yet, ignorant of the end it does or may answer: Thus much indeed may be observed, as to the methods of providence, in bringing about discoveries with respect to this, that, tho' they would have been useful to mankind from the beginning, yet they were not then afforded, but brought gradually and slowly to light, in such a manner as to exercise human industry and invention in producing them; and, for the same reason, we may suppose there are more of them, in reserve for after-ages, as important and astonishing as the invention of letters, the mariner's compass, the air-pump, telescopes, microscopes, gunpowder, printing, or any other discoveries in the ages that are past,

Again, as to the calamitous appearances or operations mentioned, earthquakes, pestilences, &c. though the assigning their *natural causes* be not enough to reconcile us to them, yet the *moral causes* or ends that may be assigned for them, in the way of intimating the divine displeasure against nations or cities, sunk in vice and wickedness, are rather arguments for a providence than against it.

But

But here, may some say, might it not be expected that the virtuous and innocent should be distinguished, and exim'd from the common calamity? This leads to consider the

V. And last objection we shall mention that is often urged against providence, *viz.* *There being, in this life, so little distinction made between the innocent and the guilty, the virtuous and the vicious;* “ Is there not,) will “ some say,) one event to them both, a lia- “ bleness to the same calamities and di- “ stresses? Nay, is it not remarkable, that the “ wicked prosper most, and seem to be the “ favourites of providence, while the pious “ and virtuous are distinguished rather by “ their sufferings? Does not this, say they, “ prove, that there is no interposition of “ providence? or, which is worse than de- “ nyng it, that its operations are inconsis- “ ent with justice and goodness?”

Was it only in the common course of conversation, that we sometimes heard reasonings of this kind, we should be apt to think that it was only for argument's sake, or to enliven discourse; but when we look at the writings of some, who are distinguished by the public voice in their favour, particularly Mr Voltaire, and, besides other whimsical pieces of his, observe, even in his histories, reflections interspersed to the above purpose, tending to weaken our belief

of the interposition of providence in human affairs, we must suppose it arises from a firm belief of what is thus insinuated or asserted.

This lively and most entertaining historian often speaks of *chance*, but how does he define it? in a way which, one would think, implies a contradiction in terms, and might be reckoned almost as good a definition of *fate*, as of *fortune* or *chance*: It is, says he, a *fortuitous concatenation of the various events of the universe*.

But, without taking any further notice of particular opponents in this argument, let us consider the argument or objection itself, and how far it may avail to disprove a providence.

First, Then, we may in part deny the truth of the fact on which the objection is built, *viz.* 'That, in God's providential administration, there is never any distinction made between the righteous and the wicked, or that the latter generally prosper most.' That there are many instances of good men's suffering much in this life, cannot and need not be denied: There is room enough left for vindicating providence, though this should be admitted: Nor can I join the learned and pious Dr Scot, in going so far to question the characters of many, who may be thus remarkable for their sufferings, as if they were not in reality what they appeared to be; of this we should judge very tenderly

tenderly and cautiously ; but it must indeed be owned, that there is not a man upon earth so righteous, or so far conformed to the will of God, but there is much to reform or rectify about him ; so far therefore as sufferings are necessary, and made, in any measure, effectual for this purpose, of promoting a man's spiritual or mental improvement, they are to be considered as a distinguishing mark of God's favour for him, and the more he would have this favour testified to him, the more may he lay his account with such trial or correction as is necessary for the end now mentioned ; even as a child may expect correction, from a wise and dutiful parent, for many things, which seem, for the time, to be overlooked by him in others.

We must therefore take the improvement of the righteous man into the account, as well as his sufferings, before we can determine as to the favour of providence with respect to him. And, in like manner, as to those who appear to flourish or prosper outwardly ; is it, on this account alone, that we are to pronounce them wicked ? this indeed would be the judgment of envy with respect to them, and, from its judgment, possibly, may arise, some of the complaints that are so common, on account of the outward favour of providence to many who seem to be more remarkable for their industry.

his superintendency, (or from the influence of those natural laws* to which he has made them subject, and by which he conducts each of them,) because of their being too minute and inconsiderable ; why should we think that any of the operations of beings endued with life, or even such as depend upon the free will of moral agents, should be too inconsiderable to be regarded and regulated by him ? And why may we not suppose that, as in his works of nature, so also in his works of providence, he has established certain laws or methods of proceeding, not discoverable by us at present, nor encroaching on man's natural liberty, but, agreeably to which, certain measures of conduct are uniformly and invariably connected with certain consequences as to happiness or misery, either here or hereafter, as naturally as vapours ascend, or stones fall downwards.

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pernatorial revelation he has given us. The same may be also said in another sense, that it is not from the will of God's Providence with respect to futurity, as apprehended or conjectured by us, that we are to take our measures of conduct, but to use these means that appear agreeable to the rules now mentioned, and to trust in him for their events and success.

Another reason for being more suspicious of the prosperous man's character is, that prosperity is generally found more dangerous to virtue than adversity, as it draws after it many temptations, furnishes incentives to, and gratifications of many corrupt desires, and often banishes all serious thought and reflection. From all this, however, we would not have it concluded, whatever grounds of suspicion there may be, either as to guilty causes or corrupt effects of outward prosperity and success; from this, I say, we would not have it concluded, that the consideration of outward circumstances alone, be they ever so favourable, is sufficient to determine as to the characters of men, unless their conduct in and improvement of them be likewise taken into the account, and, from the whole we may conclude, that the truth of the fact, *viz.* "The wicked's flourishing in the world more than the righteous," is what we cannot warrantably determine or ascertain. But

Secondly, Instead of admitting, that the wicked prosper in this life more than the righteous, I might undertake to prove the contrary, *viz.* that the righteous prosper most; that is, if prosperity be estimated according to the degree of their happiness. If, indeed, we estimate prosperity according to outward circumstances and acquisitions, it cannot be denied but the wicked may have a large share of them; but may they not have much misery, secret anguish, and self-condemnation amongst with them? may they not be the means of fostering many guilty passions that break their rest or peace of mind, mar their self-enjoyment, and thereby destroy what constitutes real prosperity and solid happiness, even in the present life.

On the other hand, let the good man's outward straits and sufferings be what they will, his *happiness* or *real prosperity* may justly be said, even here, to be superior; he places his happiness in the divine favour and approbation, and, while the sense of this in any measure prevails, or is diffused into his soul, there is no comparison betwixt even his present happiness and that of the wicked, who is a stranger to God and inward happiness, or mental enjoyment, even when his outward state appears most happy and prosperous.

3. *Lastly*, was the disparity still greater, in the distributions of Providence to the righteous and the wicked in this life; What does it prove? but that this is not the whole of our being; that there is another state to succeed this, in which these distributions shall not only be made agreeably to infinite justice and goodness, but likewise appear or be manifested as such; that the ways of Providence, as corresponding with the Divine perfections, may be fully and finally vindicated.

Even a few instances of good men's suffering here, in conformity and submission to the will of God, or of their seeming to be overlooked by Providence, are enough to prove the certainty of a future state of retribution, and even a few instances of the remarkable interposition of Providence, for rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked, in this life; even a few instances of this, I say, are enough to prove such a superior attention to human concerns at present; were there many instances of it, the great argument for a future state of retribution would be the more weakened; if miracles were often wrought, for distinguishing between the righteous and wicked here, the exercise of industry and foresight would be, in a great measure, superseded; and, without miracles, such a distinction could not, in many cases, be made; Upon

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the whole, by its not being made here, we are taught to look assuredly for its being made hereafter, when the wonderful economy of Providence shall be compleated, and shall appear subservient to the greatest general good.

E R R A T A.

page. line. VOLUME I.

- 3. 8. For *health* read *life*, and for *likeways* read *likewise*,
- 15. 26. For *has* read *have*.
- 40. 25. For *about* read *labour*.
- 88. 17. For *grips* read *gripe*.
- 132. 33. For *men* read *man*.
- 190. 1. For *brewed* read *brewd*.
- 191. 26. For *being, in some measure, attentive to his*, read *his being, in some measure, attentive to it*.
- 276. 5. For *none to be of them*, read *none of them to be so*.

End of the first Volume.

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Vade





